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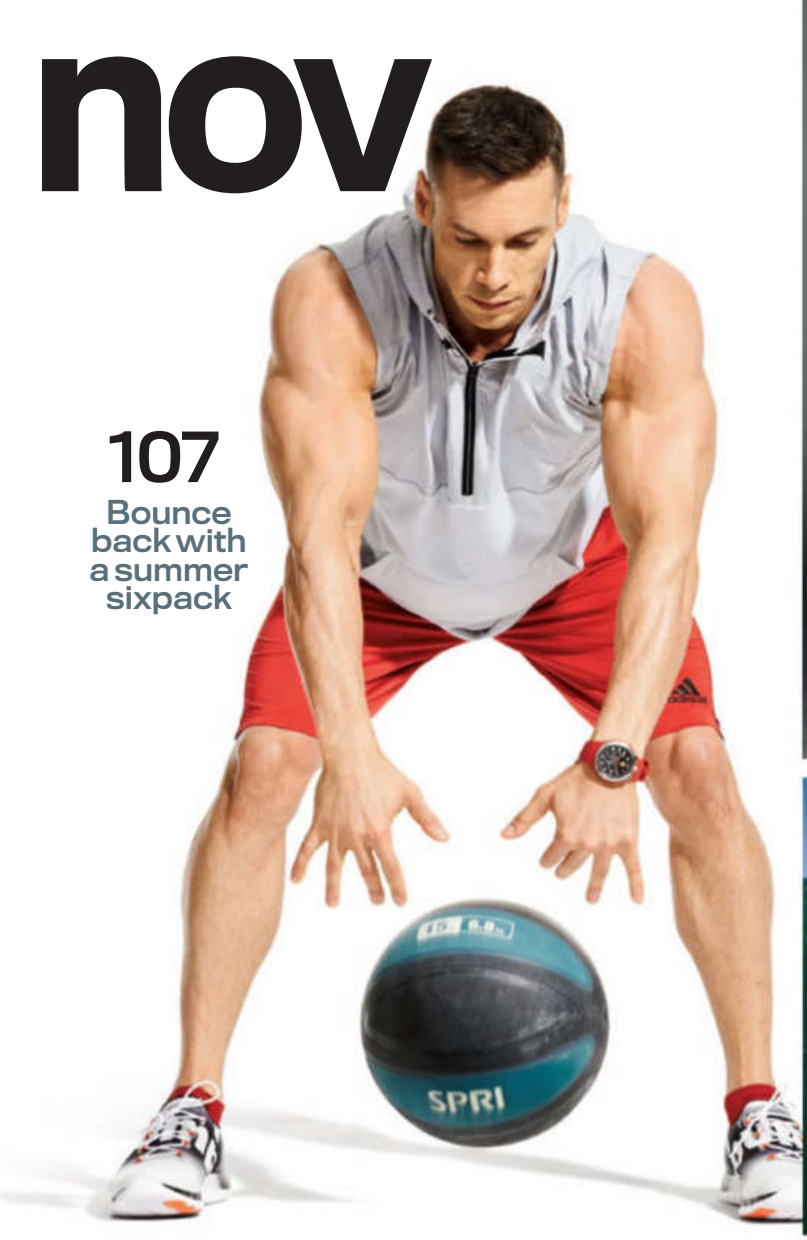
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Ronda Rousey: force of nature

In nearly eight years since we launched *Men's Fitness*, Ronda Rousey is the only female athlete we've had on the cover. Ever. This is an extraordinary departure for a magazine dedicated to the fitness and health of men, but one which is totally deserved.

Ronda is a once-in-a-generation athlete who embodies the spirit and character of this magazine. She is, first and foremost, a supreme fighter. Her self-discipline, dedication to training and diet, and mental attitude is second to none (page 48). It's little wonder she was voted "the most dominant athlete alive 2015" by *Business Insider*, beating other superstar athletes such as LeBron James, Serena Williams, Usain Bolt and Cristiano Ronaldo. Moreover, she entered what is arguably the world's most masculine sport and gained a name by her actions, not divisive words. And she did it with a seemingly casual, calm attitude. Her verbal exchanges with her opponents (and Floyd Mayweather) haven't been bluster or grandstanding, but statements of fact. She seems to possess a quiet dignity; she knows her abilities and limitations; she keeps her ego balanced and gets the job done. She is a female, but isn't defined by her gender. She is at once cool and approachable and as you'll read in her interview possesses a gentle side, but in the Octagon, thanks to her training, is a fearsome opponent.

Put simply, Ronda Rousey has honed herself, physically and mentally, into the best version of herself possible. And that's the most anyone can aspire to, male or female.

Stay strong.



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MEN'S FITNESS

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Q SHOULD I BE USING THE SAUNA AFTER A TOUGH WORKOUT?

Heat from the sauna can soothe sore muscles temporarily, but if you've had an intense session that might not be the best plan. "When you recover from exercise, your heartrate should come back down to normal," says physical therapist Patrick Walsh. "Sitting in a sauna for more than five minutes is going to keep your heartrate up — it's essentially a form of passive exercise — so it'll delay your body from starting its recovery process." Save it for a light training day.

Q I'M A VEGETARIAN AND I WANT TO TRY THE PALEO DIET. WILL I BE ABLE TO GET ENOUGH PROTEIN?

"Just about," says nutrition expert Anthea McCourtie. "Since grains and legumes are out, you're going to be very reliant on eggs, nuts and seeds. They're all good foods but not lean sources of protein so you could end up with quite a high fat content in your diet." One solution is to allow lentils and beans — rabid Paleo fans will object, but by soaking them overnight you'll dodge the worst of the toxins that they say you should avoid.

Q I'VE HEARD RUNNING CAN LEAD TO GUT ISSUES. WHAT CAN I DO TO MAKE SURE IT DOESN'T?

Well, short distances aren't known to cause any problems, but a Monash University study found that extreme endurance runners — anyone doing four hours of exercise, especially on consecutive days — saw changes in the wall of their gut, leading to intestinal bacteria leaking into the blood. The body's response is similar to a serious infection. People who took on events under-prepared suffered worse, so give yourself plenty of time and build up your distance gradually — the study found that people who did this produced more anti-inflammatory Interleukin-10, helping to reduce the damage.

You ask, we answer... with a little help from our friends.

ASK MEN'S FITNESS



Coastal headlands provide good terrain for trail runners.

Q How can I train for trail runs if I live in a city?

"Trail running requires increased stability and balance that you're not going to get pounding the pavement," says running coach George Anderson. "Add in some 'hill sprints' up flights of stairs, but be careful to build these in gradually as they can take their toll on calves and knees. You can also develop balance in the gym. Do two or three sets of single-leg squats, using a Bosu ball for an extra challenge."

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For more details, see p41 or call 02 9439 1955



GET IN TOUCH

Post your fitness questions.

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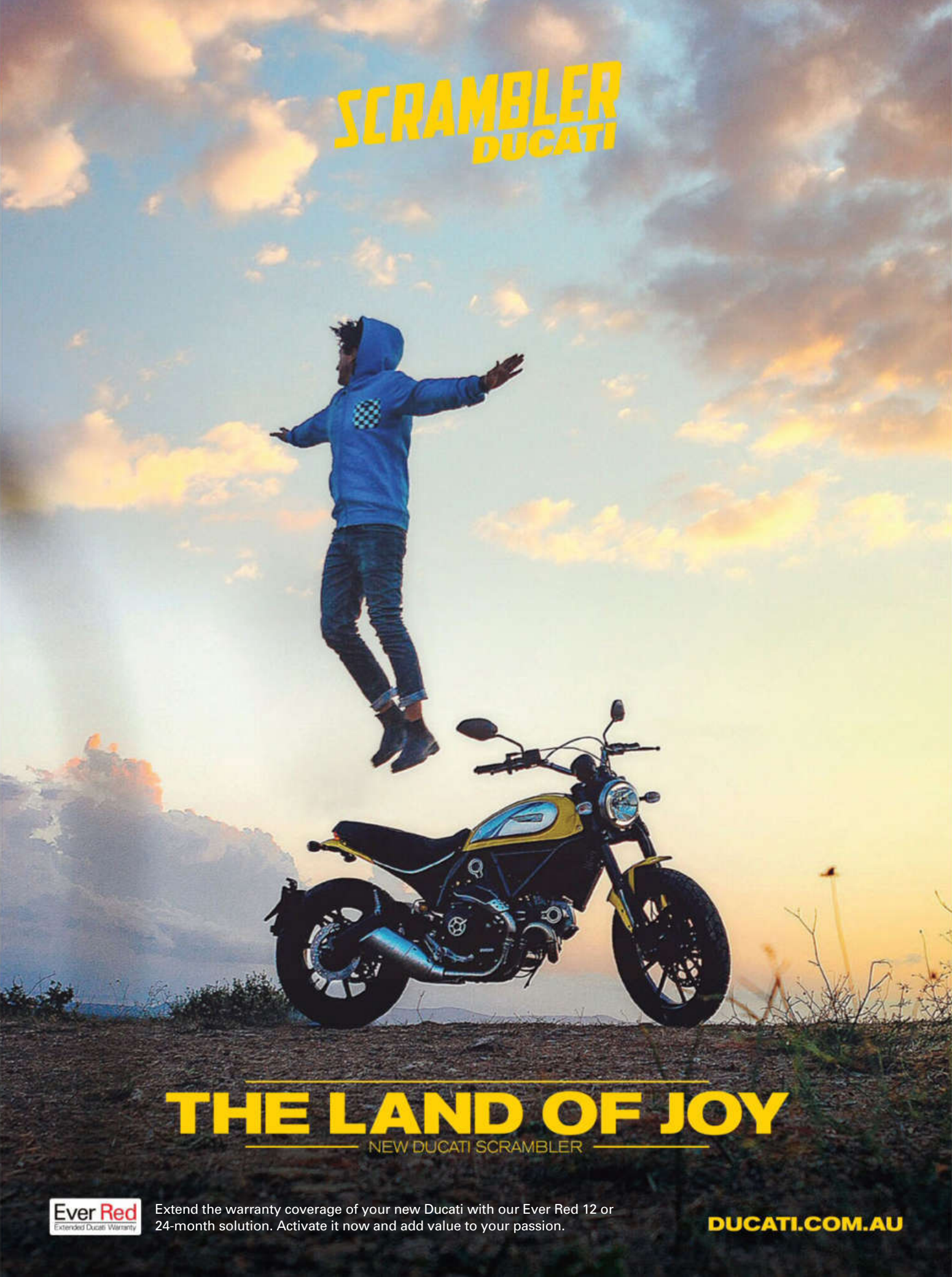
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Training diary

1 MONTH AWAY

2 MONTHS AWAY

3 MONTHS AWAY

RUNS



November 1
Tropical Journeys Great Barrier Reef Marathon Festival
Where: Port Douglas, QLD
What: Run the 74km JCU Ultra Marathon, the 42km or the 21km half marathon along the fringing reefs.
Contact: greatbarrierreefmarathon.com.au



December 20
6 Inch Trail Marathon
Where: North Dandalup, WA
What: Now in its 11th year, this 46km event takes place on part of the spectacular Munda Biddi Trail. Open to runners of all abilities.
Contact: 6inchtrailmarathon.com



January 10
Cadbury Marathon
Where: Claremont, TAS
What: Choose from a 42km, 21km, 10km or 5km run, while kids tackle the 1km course. Every finisher gets a goodie bag. Yes, it includes chocolate.
Contact: cadburymarathon.com.au

RIDES



November 19-22
Avanti Plus Hellfire Cup
Where: Kellevie, TAS
What: Tear your way through rugged Tassie on a four-day stage race, either solo or in pairs. Camping at the race village is free and lunches are provided.
Contact: hellfirecup.com



December 6
Sally's Ride
Where: Launceston, TAS
What: Saddle up and ride between 25km and 160km through the lush, green Tamar Valley while raising funds for mental health awareness.
Contact: sallysride.com.au

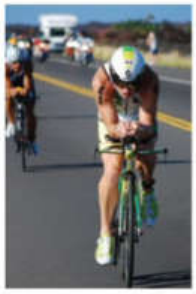


January 24
Audax Alpine Classic
Where: Bright, Vic
What: Now in its 30th year, this multi-option event includes "Australia's toughest single-day ride", the 320km Ultimate, with its 5500m of climbing.
Contact: alpineclassic.com.au

TRIATHLONS



November 28-29
Bribie Island Tri
Where: Bribie Island, QLD
What: Experience the beauty of Bribie while you smash out a PB. With its tide-assisted swim, flat, fast cycle and shaded run, it's a favourite among racers.
Contact: bribietri.com



December 12-13
T3X Long Distance Tri
Where: Canberra, ACT
What: Show the pollies what you're made of with a 4km swim, 120km cycle and 30km run through the nation's capital. Tell Tony we sent you.
Contact: tripleedge.com.au/LongDistanceTri



January 26
Australia Day Triathlon
Where: Perth, WA
What: Triathletes/duathletes of all ages and skill levels will find a race to suit them here as they compete in and around the Swan River.
Contact: allbarnone.com

SWIMS



November 29
Coogee Island Challenge
Where: Coogee, NSW
What: Power your way around Wedding Cake Island on a 2.4km course or, if you're just starting out, give the 1km Splash and Dash a red-hot go.
Contact: oceanswims.com.au



December 6
Bondi To Bronte Ocean Swim
Where: Sydney, NSW
What: Give kids' cancer a good kicking through fundraising while enjoying a sweet summer swim between two of Sydney's most iconic beaches.
Contact: bondito bronte.com.au



January 31
The Big Swim
Where: Sydney, NSW
What: This star of the ocean swim calendar will see entrants battling what can be very tough conditions from Palm Beach to Whale Beach.
Contact: oceanfit.com.au

ADVENTURE



November 7
Raw Challenge
Where: Hobart, TAS
What: An 8km obstacle race with a difference, you'll find yourself climbing over shipping containers, flying down water slides and crawling through tunnels. Epic!
Contact: rawchallenge.com.au



December 5
Mud Run
Where: Sydney, NSW
What: Get down and extremely dirty as you battle your buddies over 7km of filthy mud pits and bog holes. Pro tip: don't wear your new Brooks runners.
Contact: mudrun.com.au



January 9
Adventurethon Albany
Where: Albany, WA
What: Off-road running, mountain-biking and kayaking through sites of natural beauty and Australian military history – a fantastic event.
Contact: adventurethon.com.au

Got an event in your state that *MF* readers can train for in 2015? Email details to ashley@mensfitnessmagazine.com.au with a couple of good action photos.

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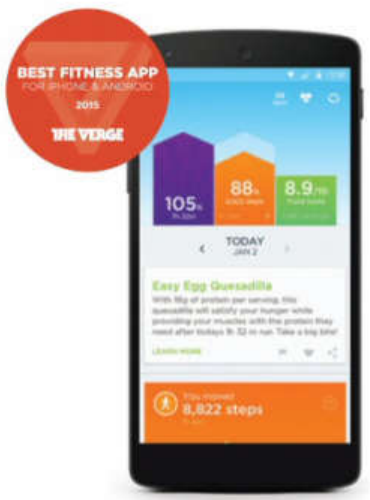
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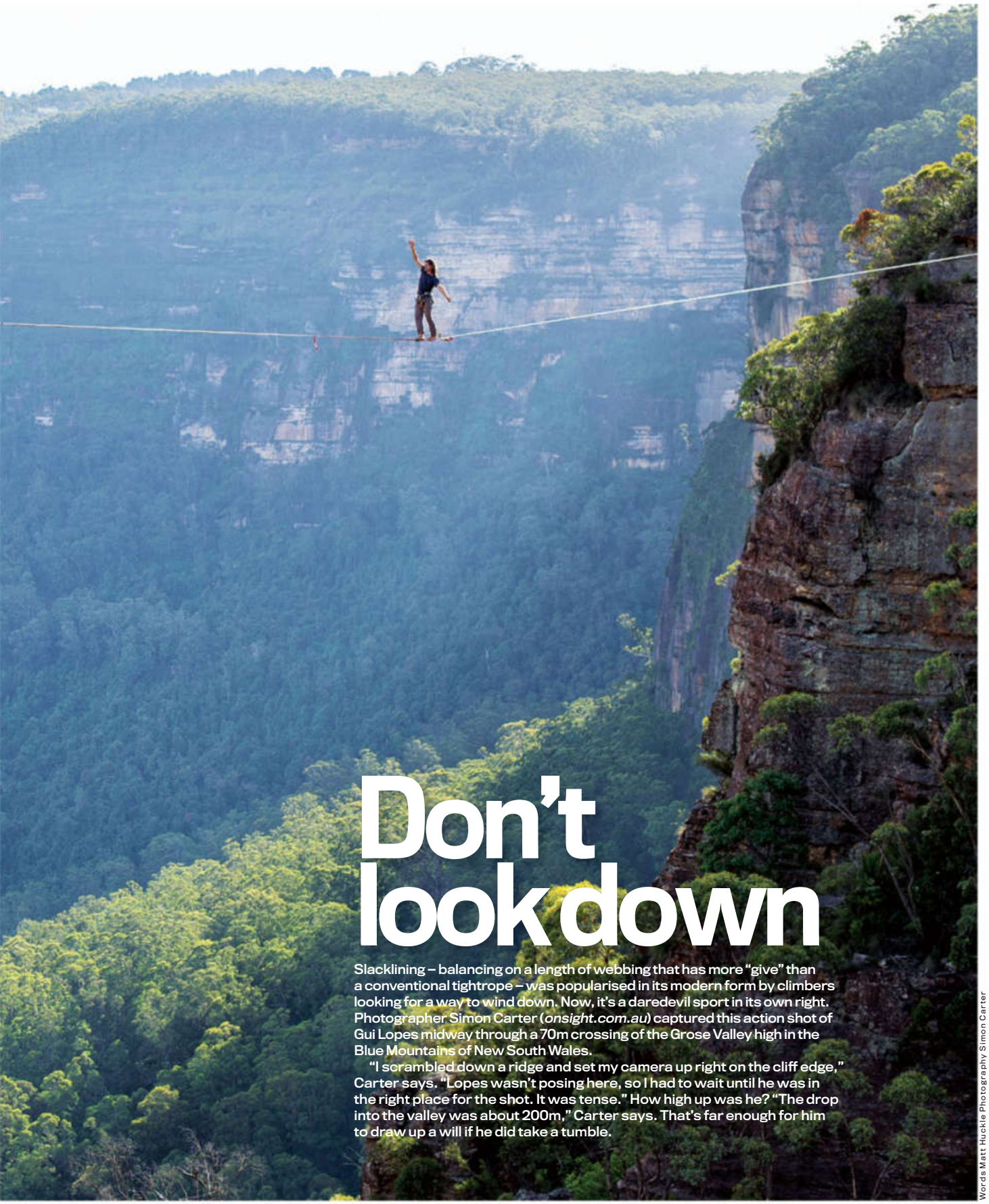
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Don't look down

Slacklining – balancing on a length of webbing that has more "give" than a conventional tightrope – was popularised in its modern form by climbers looking for a way to wind down. Now, it's a daredevil sport in its own right. Photographer Simon Carter (*onsight.com.au*) captured this action shot of Gui Lopes midway through a 70m crossing of the Grose Valley high in the Blue Mountains of New South Wales.

"I scrambled down a ridge and set my camera up right on the cliff edge," Carter says. "Lopes wasn't posing here, so I had to wait until he was in the right place for the shot. It was tense." How high up was he? "The drop into the valley was about 200m," Carter says. That's far enough for him to draw up a will if he did take a tumble.

Words Matt Huckle Photography Simon Carter


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Breakthroughs



William and Susan Brinson/Food styling by Suzanne Lenzer; Prop styling by Stephanie Hanes

Don't cheat your body by saving all your protein for dinner – start at breakfast instead.

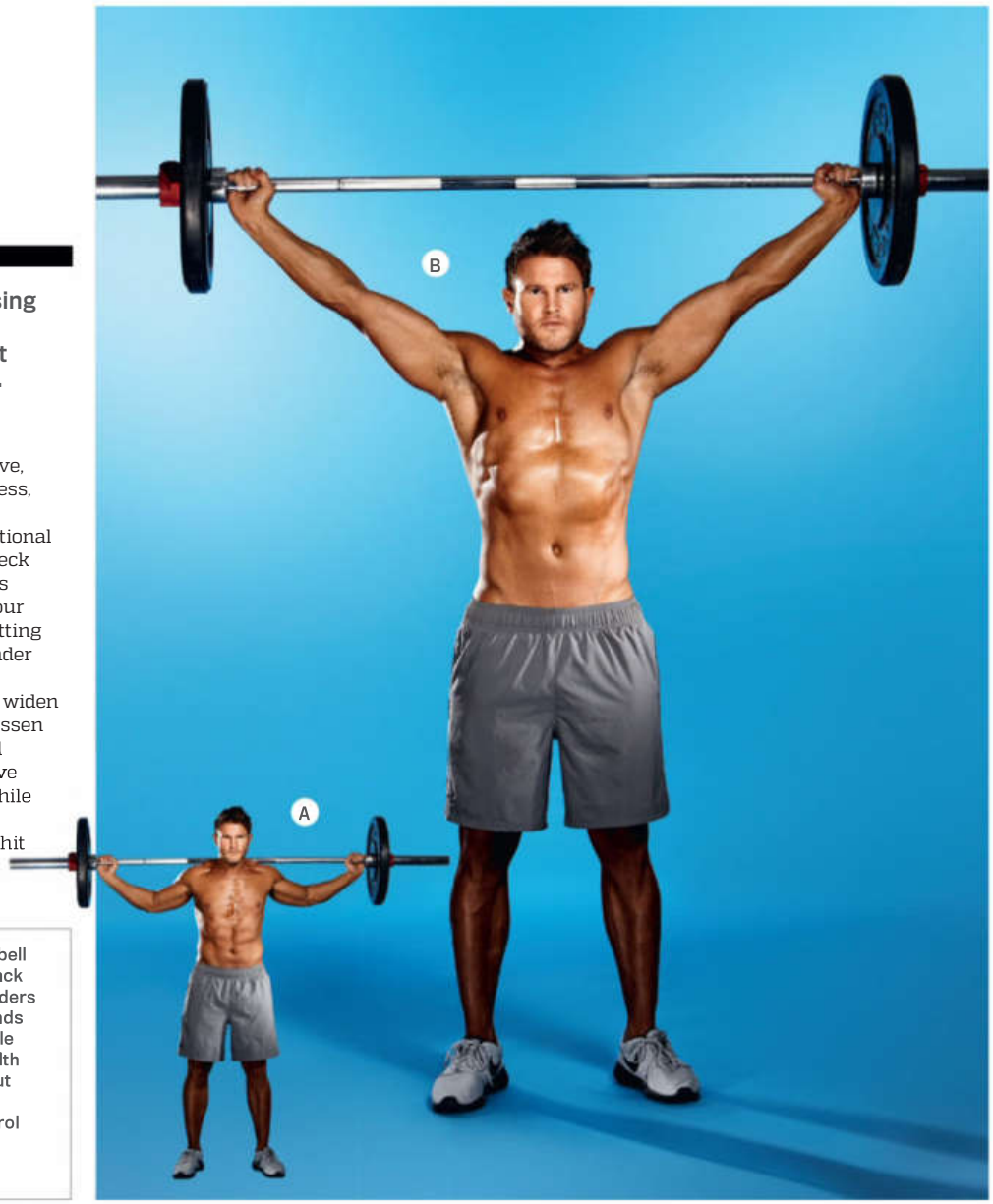
Protein: Go big, go early

Those protein guidelines you've been following? Throw them on the scrapheap along with the PalmPilots, VHS tapes and Shane Warne bucket hats. The amount of daily protein they recommend, based on outdated testing techniques, isn't enough to build lean muscle mass or keep you feeling full, researchers now say. According to a new study in *Applied Physiology, Nutrition, and Metabolism*, a healthy, active adult needs about 1.2g of protein daily for every kilo of body weight, compared with the old number of 0.8g – a 50% increase. (And if you lift, you need even more.) The way we time our protein intake – we eat about 60% of the entire day's ration at our evening meal, the study found – isn't helping us either. Since our bodies can't store protein for long, what we eat at night is gone by morning; so, by not replenishing it regularly, we limit the hours protein has to do its work, building and preserving muscle. To get protein's max benefits, split it evenly among all three meals, researchers say, starting with breakfast. And focus on high-quality animal-based protein, which is packed with nutrients and essential amino acids. Eggs are a great protein source, with about 6g per egg, as well as other good stuff like choline and vitamins B12 and D, which help keep energy up. –ADAM BIBLE

High and wide

Revolutionise your pressing with the Klokov press – a Russian weightlifting move that builds T-shirt-filling shoulders.

Among gym-goers in the know, the name Dmitry Klokov is mentioned with the same reverence that endurance athletes use for Craig Alexander or Richie Porte – after all, if scooping Olympic gold for weightlifting doesn't give your lifts legitimacy, not much else can. And don't worry if your pressing is less than impressive because his signature move, the Klokov press, will work for anyone. Traditional behind-the-neck pressing plays havoc with your shoulders, putting your joints under unnecessary pressure – so widen your grip to lessen the strain and make the move tougher, all while building your very-hard-to-hit deltoids.



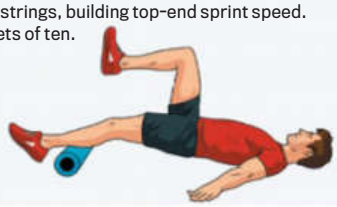
How to do it
Sets 3
Reps 8
Rest 60sec

Hold a barbell across the back of your shoulders with your hands roughly double shoulder-width apart. Without using any leg drive, press it overhead. Pause at the top, then lower under control – don't risk your neck.

Know your rolls

Those rollers you see in the gym can do more than just de-knot your muscles. Use them to upgrade three classic exercises.

BRIDGE
Put the roller under one calf – the closer to your foot, the tougher the move – and raise the other leg. The position means you'll use your glutes rather than hamstrings, building top-end sprint speed. Do two sets of ten.



ROLL-OUT
You don't need a wheel to do this abs move. Rest your forearms on the roller and slide forward, then back, aiming for three sets of eight slow reps in total. You'll feel it in the morning.



PUSHUP
Think of this as a variation on the medicine ball passing pushup. Grasp the roller with a neutral grip, do a pushup, then pass to the other arm. The instability will increase torso activation, and the increased range of motion will build your chest. Do two sets of as many reps as you can.



Words Joel Snape Photography Mark Harrison Model Daniel Ventura@WAthletic

IMPROVE YOUR SKIN FITNESS

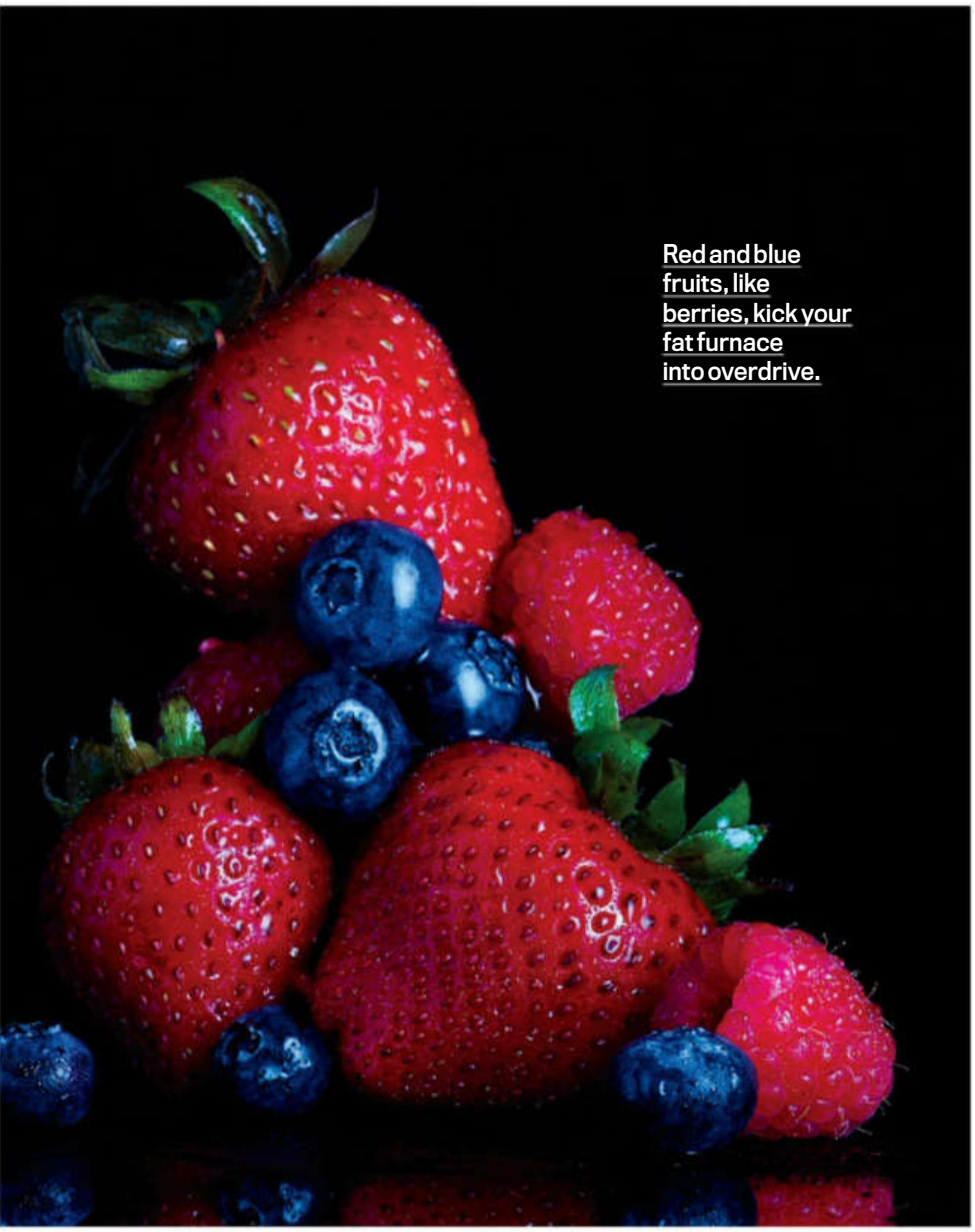
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Red and blue fruits, like berries, kick your fat furnace into overdrive.

Some fruits help your body burn more fat

Piling on the grapes and berries could help you lose weight, says a new study in the *International Journal of Obesity*. In it, mice that ate the equivalent of 360g of fruit a day (two to three human servings) gained 40% less weight than those that didn't.

In layman's terms, it works like this: resveratrol — an antioxidant found in most fruit — screams "Hurry!" to your body, kicking its arse and telling it to speed up its conversion of white ("bad") fat into calorie-burning brown ("good") fat. This then jump-starts the fat-burning process that keeps you from gaining weight. "The browning of white fat oxidises fatty acids, generating heat in the cells, which leads to a 'leaning' effect in the body," says researcher Dr Min Du.

To fire up your own fat incinerator, get in about four cups a day of resveratrol-rich (mostly red and blue) fruits, like blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, red grapes and apples. And in case you were wondering, yes, there's resveratrol in red wine, too — you should see the mouse waiting list for *that* experiment.



Mellow out with yoghurt and kraut.

Good bacteria can improve your digestion, immunity and even heart health. Now a report in *Psychiatry Research* shows it may boost your mood as well.

Fermented foods like yoghurt and sauerkraut, which are breeding grounds for healthy germs, are known to soothe the stomach. But a survey of 700 college students found that those who regularly ate those foods also had much less social anxiety than those who didn't.

Why? A Texas Tech study from the US recently found that some gut germs act as tiny psychiatric drug-making machines, pumping out beneficial neurochemicals.

So hit the fermented fare often and let the microbes do their happy dance in your head.

Order, order! Stay lean and mean by eating the protein *before* the simple carbs.

Digging into protein and vegies first and carbs last can keep you slim, a new US study from Weill Cornell Medical College says.

When research subjects, who were served a meal of chicken breast (protein), broccoli and salad (complex carbs), low-fat dressing and butter (fat), and bread and orange juice (simple carbs), ate the simple carbs last, their post-meal glucose levels were as much as 37% lower than when they ate them first.

Study head honcho Dr Louis J Aronne thinks that the absorption of carbs is slowed down when protein and vegies are eaten first, "comparable to the effect of diabetes medications".

Bite an Apple, Buy Less Garbage

Eat something healthy, like a bite of apple, before food shopping and you'll buy 28% more fruit and vegies, *Psychology & Marketing* reports. But eat a biscuit and you'll buy more crap. Hips ahoy!

You Won't Hear This at Costco

Up to 200kg of food per person goes to waste in Australia every year. Here's why: we buy too much, cook too much and don't eat the leftovers, Cornell University in the US has found. After all – seriously, when's the last time you finished off an entire case of anything?

William And Susan Brinson /Food styling by Suzanne Lenzer. Prop styling by Stephanie Hanes/shutterstock

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Don't test either of these on a real bike

Think watching TV or using an iPad while you're on the treadmill or stationary bike slows you down? Hardly.

Engaging in a mind-challenging activity — say, playing along with *Jeopardy!* or solving a brain game — while doing cardio actually makes you work harder and go faster without even trying.

In a University of Florida study, subjects riding stationary bikes were given increasingly harder cognitive tasks, like visual processing and memory tests ("Say 'go' when you see a blue star"; "Memorise six letters"). But instead of decelerating, as was expected, they went about 25% faster while using their heads.

"When people were doing the easy tasks, they paid no attention at all to their cycling," says study head Dr Lori Altmann. "They were totally focused on the cognitive tasks and had no idea they were speeding up."

And while you're at it, next time you're on an exercise bike, have some fun and try pedalling backward: Turns out cycling in reverse elicits a higher heartrate and greater quadriceps activation, which could make forward pedalling mentally and physically easier later, an American Council on Exercise–backed study found.

Vibration platforms: bad vibes

Vibrating platforms' promise of a no-work workout may not be the lazy man's dream after all. *Arthritis & Rheumatology* warns the jiggle boards may damage knee joints and spinal discs.

Carnitine power

Researchers from Duke University in the US believe the popular supp carnitine, a compound critical for energy production, can aid muscle stamina by activating a special gene to boost the energy output of mitochondria. The study was done on mice – next up, human guinea pigs.

Join the resistance!

Pumping iron using chains and resistance bands, which give variable resistance as they stretch/contract, can bump up strength about 13% more than regular training, reports the *Journal of Strength & Conditioning Research*.



Be a gear head. *Think more, bike/run faster.*



(Super)set yourself on a mission to get stronger

Arnold did them. So did Hugh Jackman. Supersets — two exercises performed back-to-back without rest in between — have long been a staple of stellar workout routines. Now a study in the *Journal of Strength & Conditioning Research* backs up the strategy, confirming that supersets are one of the most efficient ways to get serious gains because they allow you to work your muscles harder and lift more weight in less time.

The study focused on 15 men who did the same exercises — bench presses and seated rows — as both regular sets and supersets (no rest between exercises). Result: when supersetting, they benched 10% more and rowed 23% more weight.

To blast your own routine off the ground, *Men's Fitness* training director Sean Hyson recommends supersets using opposing muscle groups, like chest and back (bench press/cable row), shoulders and back (overhead press/pullup), and bi's and tri's (dumbbell curl/triceps pushdown), doing three sets of 8–12 reps.

James Michelfelder/istock

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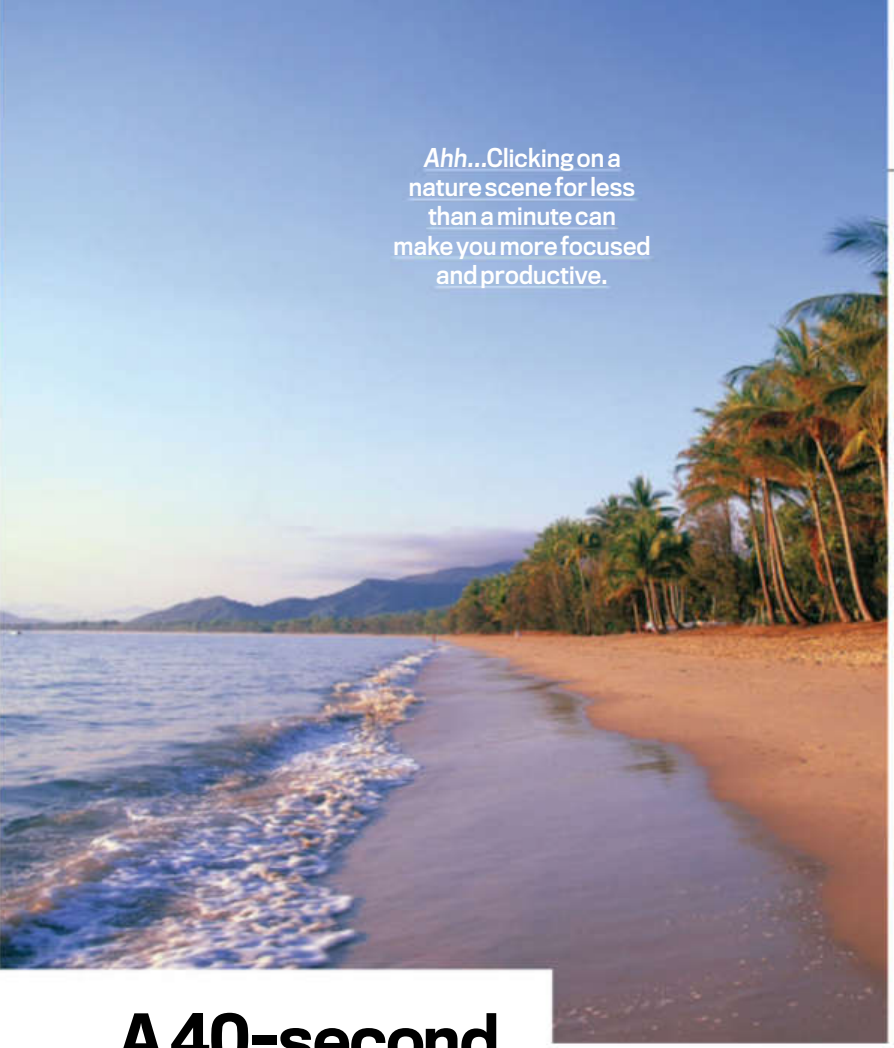
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Ahh...Clicking on a nature scene for less than a minute can make you more focused and productive.

A 40-second nature break can boost your concentration

Taking just 40 seconds to view even just a picture of nature can up your focus and accuracy during tedious, repetitive tasks. Subjects in a Melbourne University study were asked to sit at computers on which the numbers 1–9 flashed on screen for a split second, and quickly press a specific key each time — unless the number was a 3, which required no key press. After five minutes (225 flashing numbers), everyone took a 40-second desk break as their screens displayed an image of either a concrete city rooftop or a city roof planted with lush grass and flowers. When the test resumed, subjects who'd viewed the grassy, flowery roof outperformed the concrete-watchers, with significantly faster times and fewer errors.

"Taking a green micro-break to view city nature for just 40 seconds — far shorter than we thought — can boost concentration," says lead study author Dr Kate Lee, because people typically perceive these scenes as effortlessly fascinating enough to promote a sense of being away from everyday concerns. "This could be a simple strategy to help deal with the demands of city living and working."

Not surprisingly, letting subjects view real, live greenery also worked, Lee says — but till you can wrangle a park view outside your executive suite, set a verdant screen saver and view it often. –JAMES ROSENTHAL

Gentlemen prefer brains (well, sort of...)

What do most men look for in the woman of their dreams? Although ample breasts, comely legs and a superior behind may spring to mind (not necessarily in that order, or couched in such polite terminology), a Cambridge professor believes that men searching for a soul mate actually aim a little bit higher.

According to Dr David Bainbridge, author of the new book *Curvology: The Origins and Power of Female Body Shape*, the qualities men are *biologically predisposed* to desire in a soul mate are:

1) Intelligence, so she'll be a capable and responsible parent, and also pass that intelligence down to offspring
2) Symmetry, since a symmetrical face and body aren't only more attractive, they also indicate genetic stability (and larger breasts are more apt to be asymmetrical)
3) Youth, so she'll be fertile longer
4) Body shape, as women with curvier bodies are biologically proven to be bearers of healthier children.

Of course, sometimes the girl with the lopsided boobs will do just fine, Professor Bainbridge concedes.

"Humans have sex for all sorts of 'non-procreative' reasons, and it's entirely possible that men may value intelligence less" in those situations, he explains. "There's good evidence that men seek different things depending on how long a relationship they are planning."

To which we say: *Viva la difference!*

3-D MOVIES: LIKE BURPEES FOR YOUR BRAIN



Watching a 3-D film can boost thinking abilities – at least temporarily – says a study by London's Goldsmiths University. It found subjects who viewed a half-hour 3-D movie raised their cognitive skills by 23% for up to 20 minutes afterwards.

Would watching for longer be even better? Maybe not, says study head Patrick Fagan, since "past research suggests that more than 30 minutes of 3-D viewing can have the opposite effect, tiring the brain by 'overexciting' it".

However, "Extremely short sessions that act as pick-me-ups during the day would be perfect," he says, adding that 3-D stimulus might be extra beneficial for those who do ultra-demanding work, like surgeons or athletes.

Forget about arguing with her on *this* one

Women are better at "remembering to remember" or using "prospective memory" — like recalling pre-event to-dos or remembering to buy milk on the way home — than men are, a study from Aston University in the UK suggests.

The gender difference may exist because modern working women have been forced to juggle career and family, and need those memory skills.

To close the gap, researchers say, men could take a more active role in household duties and... Hey, look, the game's on!

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Oh, my God, I'm dying. (Thanks, online symptom-checker!)

We've all done it – looked up some symptom on a medical site and found the worst possible diagnosis. Pain in the side? Must be cancer. Persistent headache? Definitely a brain tumour.

That's not to say med sites can't be useful – and probably even save lives. But how accurate are they?

To find out, researchers from Harvard Med School in the US audited 23 online symptom-checkers. Result: overall, the sites got a diagnosis right on the first try just 34% of the time. But they *did* get it right in three tries 51% of the time. And their advice on whether to go to the hospital or treat a symptom at home was correct 57% of the time.

The best-rated sites were Symcat (71% right in three tries), Isabel (69%), and AskMD (68%). Check these first when you fear you're about to "check out".



Vaping may make you crave cigarettes more

Certain chemicals commonly added to e-cigs, called pyrazines, may actually make it harder for vapers to quit – and easier for them to go back to real cigs – says a new study in Tobacco Control.

Pyrazines are added to "light" cigarettes to give them flavour; e-cig makers also put them in fake cigs' e-juice to create that same smoky taste.

"Pyrazines cause physiological changes that enhance the effects of nicotine, which makes cigarettes and e-cigs more desirable," says study author Hillel Alpert.

We're not suggesting you ditch your e-cig right away – healthwise, the jury's still out. But if and when you do, be prepared for some hellacious cravings.

Don't flash those baby booze at *me*

Folks with light blue, grey and green eyes are more likely to become alcoholics, the University of Vermont in the US reports. It's unclear why, but eye-colour genes seem to line up along the same chromosome as genes for alcohol abuse.

Crap, is that true?

Share a bathroom? There's an 80% chance your toothbrush is sporting someone else's faecal matter (and harmful bacteria). Brush covers only trap moisture and foster germs, so store the brush in a cabinet, and replace it every four months.

Good life too short

Aussies are living longer – life expectancy is now 82.1 – but only the first 69.5 years will be spent without major disease, a study published in *The Lancet* reports. Australia ranks a mediocre 21st in a global "healthy life expectancy" table.



Eat more chocolate and lower your risk of a heart attack. You're welcome.

Chocoholics have healthier hearts

It's already been proven that the antioxidants in chocolate help protect your cardiovascular system. But new research from the journal *Heart* have doubled down on those findings, demonstrating that eating chocolate daily may lower your risk of heart attack.

Data from a four-year study of almost 21,000 Europeans revealed that those who ate an average of 7g – say, one small square – of chocolate a day had an 11% lower risk of heart disease and a 25% lower risk of death from any kind of cardio problem. And those who ate the most chocolate, about 100g – we're talking the head of a lifesize Easter rabbit – were linked to a 23% lower risk of stroke.

Though this was just an observational study (that is, no guinea pigs, human or otherwise), researcher Dr Phyo Myint is confident enough to say, "Generally the observed benefit increases with higher consumption" – meaning, the more chocolate, the better.

By the way, darker chocolate is healthier, heartwise, but most study subjects ate milk chocolate, so there's one taboo challenged. That said, there may be calorie and sugar concerns if you go crazy and overdo it. –ADAM BIBLE

William and Susan Brinson / Food styling by Suzanne Lenzer; Prop styling by Stephanie Hanes/shutterstock











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Game Changers



Here's the rub...

Massage can be a powerful tool for everything from recovering after a workout to boosting immunity – *if* you know what to ask for.

By Lara Rosenbaum
Photograph by Marius Bugge

If you think massage is all about lavender and wind chimes, think again. Not only do elite athletes use massage as a secret weapon to speed recovery, most NRL, AFL and A-League teams also employ massage therapists. Massage was reported to be a key factor in recently retired Australian cricket captain Michael Clarke's re-emergence from a hamstring injury earlier this year; and science has confirmed its effectiveness in relieving pain, lowering blood pressure and reducing stress. But not just any massage will do. Here's how to find the right treatment — and the right therapist — for your specific needs.

The best massage to...

...Speed recovery

Massage not only loosens you up, it also aids recovery post-workout. "Muscles need nutrients to recover, and massage improves circulation, bringing those nutrients faster," says sports medicine chiropractor Anthony Gustin. "When you work out, tissues get broken up and create waste; massage brings oxygen, amino acids and metabolites to help repair fibres."

WHAT TO GET: Sports massage, a deeper technique. Have the therapist focus on your most-worked muscles and stroke up, to move blood toward the heart.

WHEN TO GET IT: At least twice a month during intense training, ideally within hours of a tough workout. "You should also do self-massage at least three to five times a week," Gustin says. Plan a massage for your recovery day.

...Build immunity

A study conducted by Cedars-Sinai research institution in the US showed that massage increases lymphocytes and white blood cells — which help prevent disease — and slows the release of cortisol and vasopressin, hormones related to stress. "When muscles contract, lymph moves through your blood, helping to circulate white blood cells," Gustin says. "Massage has a similar effect, moving lymph through the body."

WHAT TO GET: Lymphatic massage or lymph drainage — total-body techniques using gentle strokes to move lymph fluid toward "drainage ports" under the arms and near the groin. "Regular massage can still help," notes Gustin, "but the gentler technique is more effective."

WHEN TO GET IT: Twice a month, on a rest day.

...Boost flexibility

Massage increases your range of motion by breaking up adhesions and reducing scar tissue in tight muscles. "It also releases tightness," Gustin says. "When you're in one posture for 20 minutes, your muscles tighten and 'mould'; so releasing tension through massage can get you into a more neutral position."

WHAT TO GET: Deep-tissue or myofascial massage. This targets the shoulders, hips, ankles, wrists and mid-back, which tend to get tightest simply from typical overuse or seated inactivity.

WHEN TO GET IT: Three to four times a month is best; but if you have a specific problem area, even once a month will make a difference. "Adhesions take time to resolve," Gustin says, "so you can taper frequency as you improve."



Relax.
Ask your massage therapist to identify muscles that are extremely tense – typically in the neck – and to use Swedish "rolling" massage.

Release.
Painful trigger points, common in the back, are created by old injuries and can be relieved with specific massage techniques.

Fight Disease.
Use lymphatic massage to target nodes in the armpits, neck or groin, and help white blood cell circulation.

Recover.
Target the big muscles like quads and hamstrings, with deep-tissue massage, and supplement therapy with three self-massage sessions per week.

Massage helps bring nutrients to muscles by increasing circulation.

...Help you chill out

More and more studies are showing how dangerous it can be to have excess stress and anxiety — the ensuing flood of cortisol can weaken the immune system and elevate BP, and massage can fight that. "Massage boosts serotonin [a feel-good relaxation hormone that regulates sleep] and lowers blood pressure and heart rate," Gustin says. A recent study in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* showed that just 45–60 minutes of relaxation massage lowered subjects' heartrates by more than 10 beats/minute.

WHAT TO GET: Swedish massage, which features relaxing, rolling strokes. The soothing effects are nearly instantaneous.

WHEN TO GET IT: Any time you feel you want to relax or sleep better. To maximise the results, shoot for the end of the day so you can roll into bed and sleep within a few hours.

...Relieve pain

Science backs the benefits of massage in pain relief across the board. "Muscles in pain are contracted and tight, and can't release themselves," says PJ Hair, a massage therapist who's worked with Olympic athletes. "Tight muscles also put pressure on the nerves and blood vessels, causing even more pain."

WHAT TO GET: Trigger point massage — a technique in which the therapist presses on tight areas that radiate pain, sending the nervous system the message that it needs to let the muscles release.

WHEN TO GET IT: "If the pain is due to an injury, try to go for a massage right after the tissue has healed, to improve range of motion and prevent chronic pain," Hair says. "You should notice a difference within six sessions."

DIY Massage

If you don't have a massage therapist on speed dial, here are some at-home self-massage techniques you can use to relax and refresh your tired muscles.

Use a foam roller

"Research shows that slightly softer rollers – the foam kind, without the PVC core – are more effective," Hair says. "If you create too much pressure with a harder roller, the muscles can go into a protective mode and actually hold tighter. Be sure to avoid pain – it's a misconception that pain is good. If you're doing self-massage and it hurts, you're doing it wrong. It should just feel good." A tennis ball can actually be too much...

Use your bare hands

Start by warming up the tissues, says Hair. "Apply lotion or oil for slip, and massage in long strokes for three minutes. See if you can locate areas that feel tight or a little tender. Next, apply stagnant pressure to those areas. You're essentially holding a trigger point. Breathe into it and encourage your body to relax. Once you feel the muscle release a little bit, press a little deeper until you feel it completely soften."

Previous page: Richard Smitheman Grooming by Jessi Butterfield/Exclusive Artists using Malin & Goetz and Alterna Hair Care



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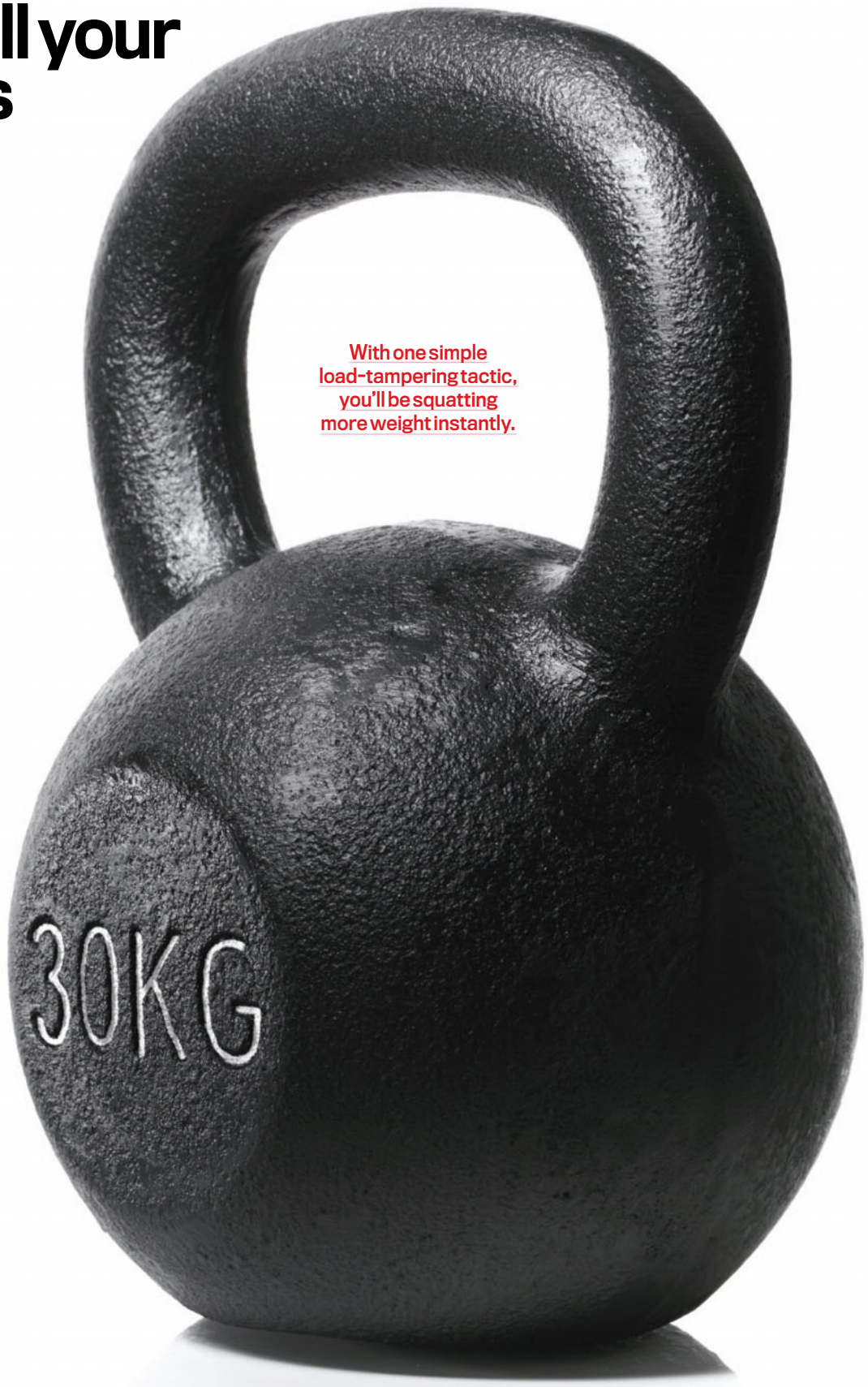
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Break all your records today

Trick your body into lifting heavier and getting bigger in 1 (one!) workout!

See if this sounds familiar: you pick up a full carton of milk, put it down, then pick up another carton that's almost empty. Of course the empty one feels lighter, but it's suddenly *so* light you accidentally almost launch it across the room. What's going on?

You're faking out your nervous system: when you pick up the heavy carton, you recruit the amount of muscle mass needed for the job – so when you suddenly pick up the lighter carton, you have more strength than you need to lift it. Believe it or not, this same principle can be used in the gym to drastically increase your strength. Here are three great ways to pull a fast one on yourself.



With one simple load-tampering tactic, you'll be squatting more weight instantly.

Shutterstock

1) Heavy loading

WHY IT WORKS: A 2013 meta-analysis at the University of Tampa in the US found that multiple sets of barbell exercises done with heavy weights led to acute increases in force output. Translation: lifting heavy immediately makes you stronger.
HOW TO DO IT: After a thorough warmup, choose a barbell exercise — almost any squat, bench press, or deadlift variation will do — and work up to a load that's 80–93% of your max (if you're not sure what your max is, take a conservative guess). Now perform two sets of 1–3 reps with that weight, resting three to five minutes between sets. Rest another seven minutes to let any fatigue dissipate, then go ahead with your normal routine.

Because your nervous system will be hyperactivated from the heavy loading, subsequent sets will feel lighter and more explosive. That means you can train harder and achieve a greater muscle-building stimulus. "Heavy loads prime the neuromuscular system," says strength coach John Rusin.

2) Explosive lifts

WHY IT WORKS: Using heavy weight isn't the only way to get stronger. Lifting lighter loads with maximum speed also fires the nervous system to recruit more musculature.
HOW TO DO IT: At the beginning of a workout, perform a barbell movement with 30–50% of your max, doing two sets of three reps, and accelerating the bar as much as you can. Rest two to five minutes, then continue your workout.

"Using submaximal loads maximises bar speed," says Rusin, "allowing the lifter to tap into fast-twitch motor units without causing prefatigue" — meaning, in layman's terms, it recruits more musculature without fatiguing your system and hurting your performance later in the workout.

3) Isometric contractions

WHY IT WORKS: Sometimes you don't have to actually lift a weight at all to get stronger from it. Just pushing against the resistance without moving it is another kind of training, known as isometric muscle contraction. In 2014, researchers at the University of Athens found that subjects got the greatest neuromuscular recruitment when performing isometric half squats with max weight.
HOW TO DO IT: Go to a squat rack and set the spotter bars at the midrange of the movement, so if you were halfway down into the squat, they'd stop the bar from going any lower. Now load the bar with so much weight you can't lift it off those bars. From here, set up under the barbell and try to squat it up. Of course, you won't be able to, but straining against the bar for three to five seconds is enough. Rest five seconds and repeat once more. Rest six to 12 minutes, then go on with your workout.

Although no actual movement will occur, you'll cause tremendous nervous-system activity that will carry over to the rest of the day's training. You could also try to set a new squat PR at this time — since what normally feels like a heavy weight will now feel lighter by comparison.

HARD FACTS

OUR TRAINING DIRECTOR, **SEAN HYSON**, SOLVES YOUR WORKOUT CONUNDRUMS





James Michelfelder

"Everyone seems to be doing Olympic lifts. Should I join the crowd?"

■ The snatch and the clean and jerk – the two lifts contested in Olympic weightlifting – are great muscle-builders and develop explosive power. But they're difficult to learn and can hurt you if you don't know what you're doing. Serious Olympic lifters spend months practising with a dowel before their coaches let them touch a barbell. That's how important technique is.

With the rise of CrossFit, however, in which Olympic lifting is a big component, snatches and cleans have become trendy, and many people try to do them before they're ready. The result is sloppy form that leads to plateau and injury.

If you're really interested in Olympic lifting, get a coach to show you how. Otherwise, stick with exercises you know – you can build muscle and power with conventional training.

Sean Hyson is the *Men's Fitness* training director and author of *101 Best Workouts of All Time*, *101bestworkouts.com*.

Attempt Olympic lifts and their variants, like the clean, only if you've been taught how to do them right.

Girl

TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE WITH

Erin Heatherton

True or false: this supermodel was first discovered on the street, plays a mean game of hoops and only wants to talk about panties?

By Brittany Smith



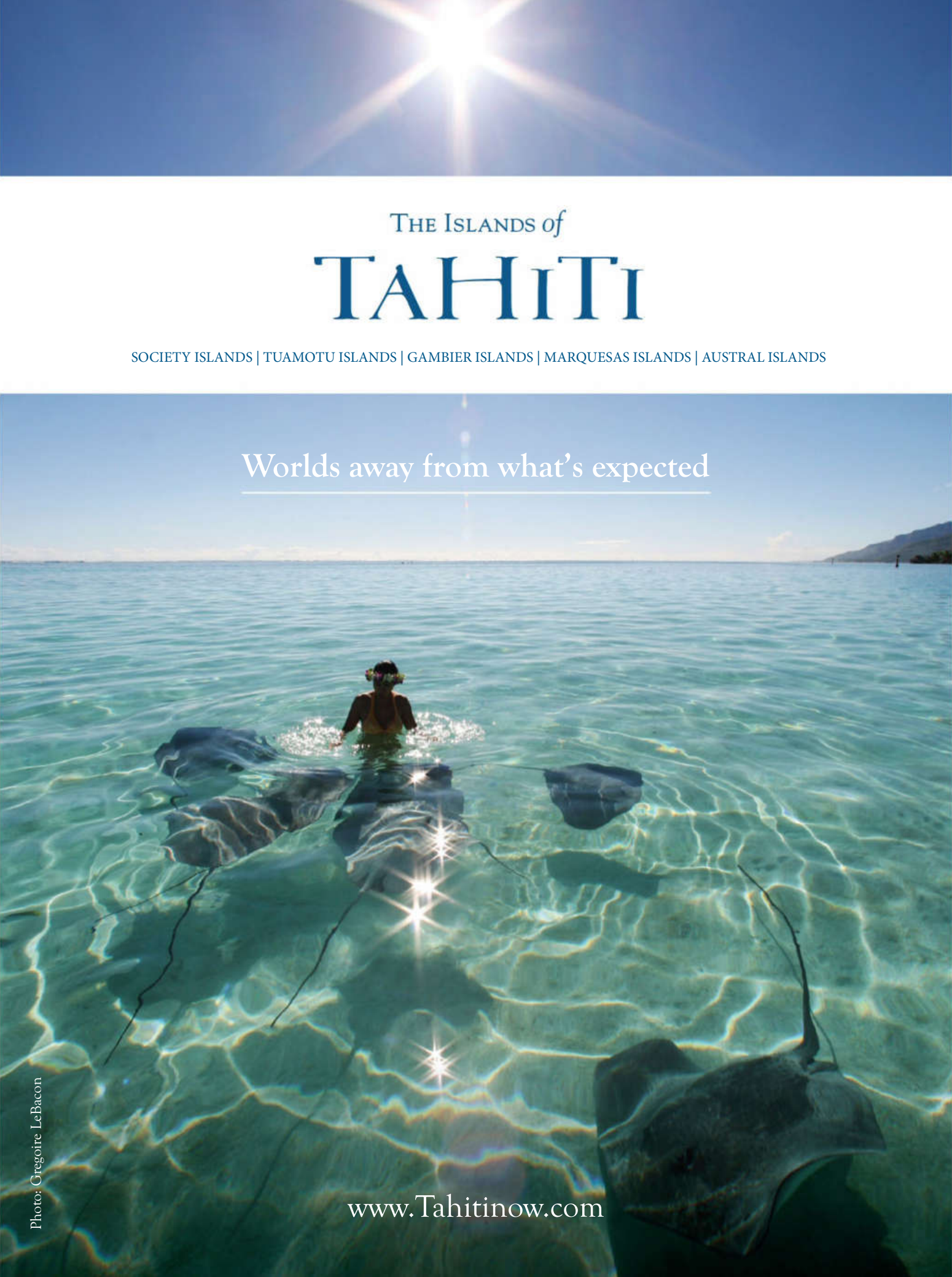
"I like a bit of trash talk," says the Victoria's Secret Angel.

Hundreds of wannabe models hope to be discovered, only to return to their normal lives when things inevitably don't work out. Erin Heatherton, meanwhile, was searching for a normal life (she was thinking of attending a university) and was scouted by an agent the minute she stepped out of her chaperone's minivan. "I was really set on my future – I just had to find the right school," she says. "Some guy got out of a taxi and chased me down the street, asking me what agency I was with."

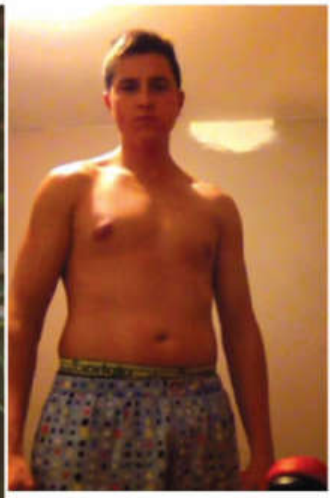
Since then, the 26-year-old American has owned the catwalk as a Victoria's Secret Angel and rocked a bikini in the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue – and it won't be long before she's charming Aussie audiences. Her 180cm frame makes her the perfect height not only for modelling but also for playing basketball: she was a top high school talent back in her hometown and even played in last year's NBA All-Star Celebrity Game. "I like a game with some trash talk," she told *The Hollywood Reporter*.

Lately, her campaign for men's fragrances has given Heatherton a chance to talk about one of her favourite subjects (and supplied us with our lie): "I love discussing guys for a change," she says. "Usually I'm talking about girls, bras, and panties!"

Russel James/Contour by Getty


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SOCIETY ISLANDS | TUAMOTU ISLANDS | GAMBIER ISLANDS | MARQUESAS ISLANDS | AUSTRAL ISLANDS
Worlds away from what's expected
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TALE OF THE SCALE
TOBIAS LEWIS

AGE: 22
LIVES: MELBOURNE
HEIGHT: 183CM
WAS: 89KG
NOW: 72KG
LOST: 17KG

Seize the moment

When Tobias Lewis started having seizures he sunk into depression and blew out to 89kg, but a tailored CrossFit program and a steely desire to succeed saw him lose 17kg and regain his lust for life.

Tobias was the "fat kid" at school but he never felt unpopular or ostracised. He played cricket and football and had a lot of good mates. But when he hit 13, he was struck down with migraines and diagnosed with bradycardia, an abnormally slow heartbeat.

It threw his life into a bit of a tailspin as he attempted to beat the condition and prove he could still live life to the full. Trouble is, he over-trained to the point where he weighed only 60kg. "I didn't look well, I was unhealthy — I just didn't eat enough," the 22-year-old health science student says.

In his early 20s Tobias began having seizures. "The doctors reckon my heart condition may have caused them," he says. The effect on his health and confidence was dramatic. "I was unable to train — it really hurt me."

For six months he wallowed in depression, eating junk food and feeling down about his future. He was especially fearful of having a seizure when he was alone with no-one to assist him, which meant he couldn't train by himself. The medications for the seizures also made him drowsy and he ballooned to 89kg.

It was a long, hard look in the mirror that made Tobias turn his life around. "I thought to myself that it didn't matter what I did as long as I did something."

He chose to join local CrossFit box Merciless Tullamarine.

It was an inspired choice: not only did it enable him to train in a group-like atmosphere where people understood and were considerate about his condition, it also helped him conquer his fear of having a seizure in public.

"The guys, especially Peter Trapp at the box, changed the exercises for me. They dialled down the intensity: there were less reps and less cardio and no box jumps — to lessen the impact on my head."

He focused on Olympic lifting with tuition from Commonwealth Games gold medallist Nick Ciancio and added in bodyweight moves such as pullups, squats and rowing. It was tough going — "I was wrecked the first time I did it" — and although the number of seizures he experienced had reduced from four or five to one a week, they were random in nature.

Diet-wise, he avoided takeaway food, and ate lots of lean protein: chicken and tuna, plus rice and salad. He occasionally slipped up but he would immediately hit the gym to work it off.

In 15 months he slimmed down to 72kg of lean, hard muscle. He had moments of doubt along the way — for example, one of his heroes, famous fitness model Greg Plitt, died earlier this year — but it only inspired him to stay the course. "It showed the transient nature of life and that you have to follow your dreams." He currently follows German Volume Training techniques — forcing muscles to grow by subjecting them to maximum volume — and enjoys agility training.

Tobias's dream is to become a model and actor. He says there were three key factors in his transformation: 1) support and love from fellow CrossFitters, 2) wanting to get back the years he lost when he was sick, and 3) his competitive nature.

"It's little things I've noticed that have changed," he says. "I don't struggle to get up stairs, I walk taller and people's heads turn when I enter a room."

He also says not feeling totally contented with what you've got is central to improving who you are: "I am happy but not satisfied. I still have things I want to achieve. When you're satisfied, it's like you've given up.

"Looking back, all the ups and downs I've been through have given me perspective. I know I can get obsessive about things, but that means I'm also determined to get what I want." ■

"When you're satisfied, it's like you've given up."

If you've a story like Tobias's you'd like to share, send an email to ashley@mensfitnessmagazine.com.au with clear before and after photos (photos must be at least 1MB each).


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Whisker away

With Movember almost here, *MF* gives the lowdown on how to turn your moustache into a chick-magnet.



Aussie blokes young and old will be cultivating soup-strainers throughout the month of November with the noble purpose of raising funds for men's health. But what kind of mo should you rock and how should you groom it? After all, you don't want to end up looking like a '70s porn star when you're aiming for a natty Errol Flynn-style pencil 'tache. Our lip fuzz guide will keep you ahead of the pack.

Mo your history

Flint razors have been around since 30,000BC, so in theory Stone Age men could have been sporting handlebar mo's while wrestling woolly mammoths. The first portrait showing a shaved man with a dinkum moustache is of an Iranian horseman from 300 BC. In the 1800s, military blokes grew luxuriant lip fuzz to reinforce their rank, and by the early 1900s, waxed, twirly moustaches had become a sign of manliness and culture. But apart from the odd freak — Charlie Chaplin, Hitler, etc — the middle decades of the 20th Century were barren for facial hair growth in general. That changed in the sexually free and uninhibited '60s when hair of any sort was equated with sexual virility. By the 1970s, admission to the Australian cricket team was virtually walrus mo only.

These days, there's a hipster-led surge in moustache popularity which shows little sign of abating.

Fuzz maintenance

The key to a healthy moustache is shampooing regularly. It will collect food and bacteria at an alarming rate, and you don't want the pretty new office secretary pointing out there's a nest of insects on your face.

Because moustache hair is coarse, it benefits from regular conditioning. Massage with a dollop of conditioner then rinse thoroughly. It will make it softer to touch for you and your many potential girlfriends.

To prevent drying and itching, use a hot face washer to steam and cleanse the skin under your mo.

Massage your mo with a dollop of conditioner and potential girlfriends will find it softer to touch.

Tools of success

Achieving that dapper mo blokes envy and babes go ga-ga for requires an investment in equipment.

You'll need a pair of barber scissors for precise trimming, a fine-toothed comb for guidance, a large and clear mirror for a good view, a razor and a steady hand — so don't get on the turps before hand or your dial might turn into chopped meat.

To start grooming, dampen the moustache hair you want to trim.

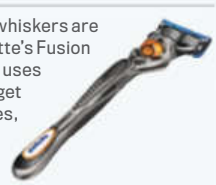
Using a fine-toothed comb, tidy your mo so the hairs run in the direction you intend them to and lasso any strays into line.

Envisage what style you want and, using the scissors, trim longer and stray hairs on the outer edge and bottom line. Snip conservatively. You can always go over it again.

au.movember.com

Blade upgrade

Those hard-to-get whiskers are doomed thanks to Gillette's Fusion Proglide shaver, which uses Flexball technology to get into cracks and crevices, ensuring a smooth, all-over shave.



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Style your dial

Essential gear to make your face look better in and out of the gym.



1



2



3

1) Wahl slate stainless steel trimmer

Ensure your beard, mo or strange facial growth is kept in check with this state of the art trimmer from Wahl. It also includes a nose hair trimmer in case your proboscis is fertile ground for unruly hair sprouting. Has a heaps-long four-hour run time and one-minute quick charge, so you'll never be far from a good trim. $149.95, *wahl.com.au*

2) Uppercut deluxe filled wash bag

Occupying this smart bag are all the toiletries and accessories you need to spruce up with when you're on the go. Face wash, shave cream, aftershave moisturiser and a toothbrush will guarantee your business trip doesn't turn out a failure because you look like a complete derro. $75, *uppercutdeluxe.com/au*

3) Proraso shave foam nourish

Proraso Shaving Foam is enriched with shea [an ivory-coloured fat extracted from the nut of the African shea tree] butter and Sandal oil. This keeps the skin soft and elastic and has a calming, anti-inflammatory effect, so shaving becomes a pleasure rather than a chore. $15.95, *prorasoaustralia.com.au*

4) Bulldog original moisturiser

The days of blokes having epidermis as rough as sandpaper went out with footy biffo and KB beer. Make sure your dial is smooth enough for the ladies with Bulldog's Original Moisturiser. It's packed with eight essential oils, green tea, green algae, konjac mannan and vitamin E. Plus, it won't leave an oil slick on your face. $12.50, *meetthebulldog.com*

"If you teach a poor young man to shave himself and keep his razor in order, you may contribute more to the happiness of his life than in giving him 1,000 guineas." ***Benjamin Franklin***



4



5



6

5) Primal Earth refresh shave gel

A synthetic-free, all-natural shave gel packed with skin-conditioning plant extracts wild-harvested in New Zealand. Because there are no chemicals in the product, there is no irritation or rash when you shave. It also protects against unsightly chafing and dryness. $8.99, *primalearth.co.nz*

6) Trishave 3in1 anti-rash shave creme

Contains a combination of teatree oil – well known for its anti-inflammatory properties – as well as soothing lavender essential oil, so your sensitive but manly skin doesn't break out in ugly rashes and abscesses after every shave. $7, *trishave.com.au*



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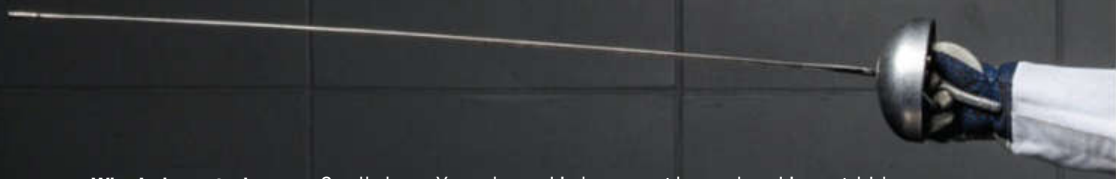
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Straight to the point

Find out how modern pentathlon world champion **Samantha Murray** became a master of five sports – and why *Game Of Thrones* gets sword-fighting so wrong.



BRIT SAMANTHA MURRAY BLENDS physical fitness with the killer skills of a sword-wielding, pistol-toting assassin. After winning gold in last year's world championships, she's the queen of modern pentathlon, which involves fencing, a 200m swim, showjumping and a final event combining pistol shooting with a 3,200m cross-country run. Here Murray, 26, reveals the secrets of modern, multi-functional fitness.

What's the typical reaction when people hear you're a modern pentathlete?
I usually have to explain that modern pentathlon is one of the oldest sports of the modern Olympics. The International Olympic Committee founder Pierre de Coubertin had a military background and the story goes that modern pentathlon mirrors what a soldier had to do to get a message to his captain – from sword-fighting to riding a horse. It looks random but the aim is for the ultimate all-round athlete who has physical, mental and technical skills.

Fencing is the pentathlon's most technical sport – what's the key to winning?
Good balance. You make an L-shape with your feet, which isn't natural, so you have to train your balance. You practise technique but it takes hours to build those instant reflexes. It's a tough workout too – the kit is virtually bulletproof so it's very heavy, but I love the combat element so it's easy to forget how sweaty I'm getting.

Is shooting as easy as it looks in movies?
No. You need to co-ordinate your breathing while controlling the trigger squeeze and focusing on the sights. People shooting handguns in films look ridiculous. There's no way anyone could fire a gun like that while riding a horse or running around.

It's the same with sword-fighting – I'm hooked on *Game Of Thrones* but I cringe when I see them fighting. There's no way you can swing massive swords like that – they would all have died in the first season!

What's your typical training schedule?
I balance three or four sports per day, doing cardio stuff in the morning – gym work, running and swimming – and technical things in the afternoon – horse riding, shooting or fencing. That's my routine from Monday to Friday. On Saturday morning I run and then I'm off for the rest of the weekend.

How important is gym work to you?
It's crucial. I do core work every day and weights twice a week. At the moment I do three sets of five deadlifts at my max to build glute power before the championships. In the winter I might do 100 reps but with minimal weight. I don't use many machines – as long as I have a squat rack for Bulgarian split squats and split squats, and a pull machine for upper-body work and rows, I'm happy.

Talk us through your win at the worlds.
I didn't start well so then I just thought, "Fuck it, I'm here to fight for what I want". The warrior came out of me and I was screaming at everyone. *Learn more at* samantha murray.co.uk.

FIVE-WAY ABS

Build chiselled abs and killer balance by doing three rounds of Samantha Murray's core workout with as much rest between rounds as you need to fully catch your breath.



INCHWORM
Sets 3 Reps 5 Rest 1min

■ "Standing upright, put your hands on the floor and walk them out slowly until you're in a pushup position, then walk back up again," says Murray.



LEG RAISE
Sets 2 Reps 10 Rest 1min

■ "Lie on your back with your legs held straight up. Lower them to the ground, trying to keep them straight. Then raise them again."



MEDICINE BALL TWIST
Sets 2 Reps 10 each side Rest 90sec

■ "My favourite exercise. Sit with your knees bent and your feet off the floor, holding a medicine ball. Manoeuvre the ball from side to side."



'The warrior came out of me and I was screaming at everyone'

Ripped to Race

Aussie superstar **Daniel Ricciardo** reveals the fitness and diet secrets that make him one of F1's best. By Ashley Gray





Formula One is a full-body sport. Cardio is important. The races are an hour and a half to two hours long so we need good endurance. But we need good strength endurance as well. The toughest thing I found when I came to Formula One was the strain on my neck. It's quite a strange muscle and if it goes in a race, in terms of fatigue, it's not really one you can recover.

The G-forces are intense. I feel them through my neck and core. A simple exercise for strengthening the neck is lying on your side and just putting a weight plate on your head. You can either hold that or lift it. For the core I use the Fitball or the TRX machine.

A lot of the exercises I do don't require machines. This is good because then I don't depend on a gym. We stay in hotels nearly every day of the year so it's cool to be able to train in your room.

Sitting on the bike for 30 minutes is a good way to kickstart your body. Because we travel so much, an easy way to get back into it when you come off a plane is sitting on the bike. It's good to top up your little bit of endurance.

I have a naturally fast metabolism. I'm always active so it's not too much of a challenge to stay slim. You have to be as light as possible in the car.

I try to get plenty of colours in my diet. So definitely a lot of vegetables: I love salads. I don't eat too much red meat, because it's quite heavy and it takes a long time to digest. I have basic proteins: fish, chicken or edamame beans. I also try to stick to natural foods. If I have cereal, for example, I add seeds like chia and flaxseed.

My weakness is my sweet tooth. I love sweets. Mainly just ice-cream and chocolate. But I've had to stop eating so much of those to help maintain my weight. I used to eat ice-cream nearly every day. Now I only have it a couple of times a week.

Sport is complex and things always happen that are out of your control. You get used to it. I've been racing since I was young and even in go-karting things happen — whether

Vital Stats



Lives: Monaco
Age: 26
Height: 179cm
Weight: 69kg
F1 starts: 81 as of the 2015 Italian GP
F1 wins: 3
Podiums: 9



someone knocks you off the track or your chain breaks and you can't finish the race, you just deal with it. I've got to where I wanted to be and I'm living my dream so even a bad day is still a relatively good day. I think that's the way you have to look at things.

■ Music plays a big role in my preparation.
Normally it will fit the tone with whatever I'm doing at the time. When I stretch before the race with Stu, my trainer, the music's quite chilled and, in a way, we're kind of meditating as well. Then when we start doing the warm-up and my heartrate goes up, the intensity of the music increases as the genre switches to something more hardcore. By the time I'm on the grid, I'm fired up and ready to go.

■ My win in Canada last year was my most memorable career moment.
It's just everything you dream about as a kid and it's emotional in such a cool way. When you stand on the podium you have so many things running through your head – the whole journey to get there – and I think that's a really cool feeling.

■ My favourite relaxation activity is riding dirt bikes.
It's a great way to get away. Riding dirt bikes, you either have to go into the forest or the desert. So you're already detached from the chaos of it all. And that's freedom for me. Just being in control and having the wind blowing in your face... It's an adventure.

■ The best piece of advice I've received is just to have fun.
Do it because you really want to do it. I think that if you have fun doing something then you're going to be much more successful at it.

■ A fan once asked me, out of the blue, if I'd marry her.
I was doing a Q&A at a shopping centre and she was like: "Hi, I've got a question: Can I marry you? And if not, can you at least give me a hug?" I said: "I won't marry you, but I will give you a hug." ■



Getty

HARDCORE FIGHT SPECIAL

Ultimate athlete

Chicks are soft, right? Bullshit. Ronda Rousey is the hottest, hardest woman on the planet – and you need to learn from her. *MF* MMA editor Richie Cranny taps her hardcore training and self-belief secrets before UFC 193 in Melbourne on November 15.

SO HOW DOES A WOMAN make the cover of *Men's Fitness*, a magazine dedicated to male health and wellbeing? Well, "Rowdy" Ronda Rousey is no ordinary woman – judo Olympian, undefeated UFC champion, movie star, fashion model, inspiration to millions – and many would argue she's the #1 athlete on the planet right now of either sex.

Set to headline the landmark UFC 193 event at Melbourne's Etihad Stadium on November 15, in front of a predicted attendance of 70,000, the American had to overcome adversity early in life when her father tragically took his own life when Rousey was just eight. Fortunately, her former judo world champ mother recognised her daughter's potential and got her into the martial art.

Rousey went on to win numerous medals as a judoka, including gold at the 2004 World Junior Championships and bronze at the 2008 Olympics. She crossed over to mixed martial arts (MMA) in 2010 and has been victorious in all of her three amateur and 12 professional bouts.

Since being crowned the UFC women's bantamweight (61kg) champion in 2012, Rousey has successfully defended her belt six times and will attempt to do so on a seventh occasion in front of an adoring Melbourne crowd, against fellow unbeaten MMA star Holly Holm. She's also collected accolades such as ESPN's Best Female Athlete and Best Fighter (male or female) awards for 2015.

Whether you've witnessed Rousey applying her inescapable armbar in the Octagon; caught her appearances in Hollywood movies *The Expendables 3*, *Fast & Furious 7* and *Entourage*; eyed her stunning photo shoots; or just heard guys saying they love her and gals saying they'd love to be her, this is the type of once-in-a-generation athlete you cannot ignore.

The best part? Rousey is as down to earth as she is talented and was happy to share with *MF* penetrating insights into her competitive mindset, training routine, diet and recovery while on a recent promotional visit Down Under. If you want to be the best, you need to learn from the best...



Champ: *Celebrating beating Bethe Correia in August.*

RICHIE CRANNY: **Ronda, it's a real privilege to meet you. Can we start by talking about your mental strength? In your inspirational autobiography, *My Fight / Your Fight*, you talk about how emotional you are and admit that you cry a lot. So how do you flick the switch from being such a sensitive person in everyday life to the killer we see in the cage?**

RONDA ROUSEY: I think it's more of a Pavlovian response – there are certain things that set me off and put my mind there. It's the events of fight week, like making weight, and of the actual day of the fight, like walking into the arena. I go and take my nap in my little locker room, with the background noise and the earlier fights on the TV screen. Then, when it's time for me to come out, they play my walkout song [*Bad Reputation* by Joan Jett]. I purposely don't listen to it the rest of the time, because it does trigger that response – I flip into fight mode. It's like there was no time in between that second and when I last fought. Like I was just there, you know? Then they're doing all of the introductions and I'm standing in the cage and I'm exactly where I belong. It's the only time I'm really emotionless. There's no room in my brain to have emotions, because there are so many things to observe and so many decisions to make and there's so much focus.

RC: **I take it you won't be changing your walkout song anytime soon then...**

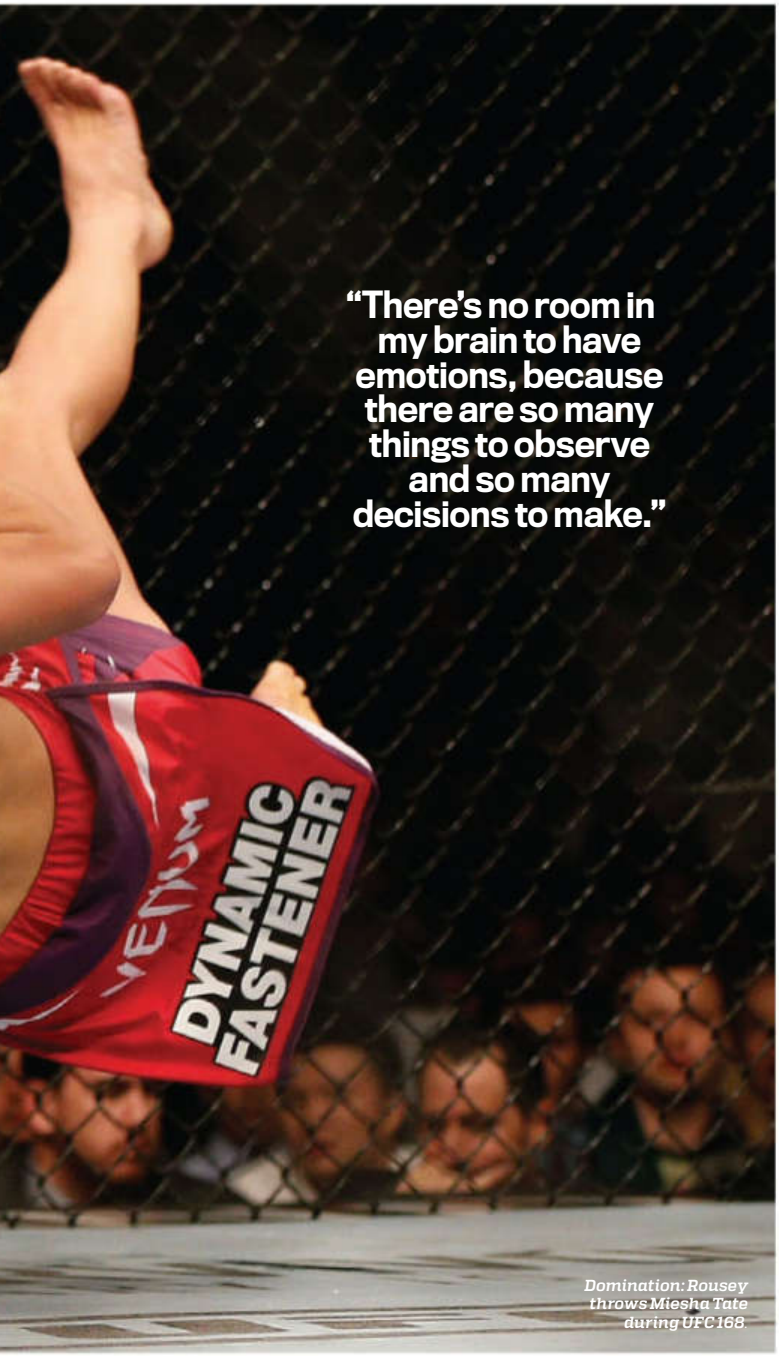
RR: No, never!

RC: **From reading your book, your mum is obviously your #1 influence, but who else has helped you reach the pinnacle of your two sports, and in what way?**

RR: Well, even though he was only with us for a short time, my Dad also influenced me a lot – and continues to do so to this day. He's the one who really instilled in my mind, from a very young age, that I was meant to be something exceptional.

RC: **Are you someone who takes time off after a fight or do you train all year round?**

Getty



"There's no room in my brain to have emotions, because there are so many things to observe and so many decisions to make."

Domination: Rousey throws Miesha Tate during UFC 168.



Eye to eye: *Rousey and Correia face off at the UFC 190 weigh-in.*

Want iron abs?

Rousey ends every training session with this extra routine.

- 50 ankle touches
- 100 crunches
- 50 ankle touches
- 50 elbow-to-knee touches (each side)
- 100 single-leg raises (each side)
- 100 double-leg raises
- 100 single-leg raises (alternating legs)
- 50 leg circles inwards
- 50 leg circles outwards
- 100 situps (while removing hand wraps)

RR: I pretty much train the whole year. I'm usually back in the gym two to three days after a fight because I don't even know what to do with myself outside of training. After this last fight [beating Bethe Correia at UFC 190 in Brazil in August] was the only time I've been forced to take a break. My coach insisted I had to take 20 days. I was like, "What am I going to do? I have nowhere to go." Sometimes I'll complain that I'm tired and try to rest, but the second I rest, I feel I need to get back to the gym. It's conditioned in me. I've shown up the day after a fight, and they've gone, "What are you doing here?" It's kind of like *Dawn of the Dead*, where the zombies all know to go to the mall – somehow they just know they should be there. If I was a zombie, I'd still go to the gym.

RC: **Did you stick to the 20 days?**
RR: I did, actually. It wasn't as hard as I thought it would be once I committed to it like it was an order from my coach and the best thing for my training. Then I was like, "I'm gonna rest the hell out of these weeks!" and it was really nice.

RC: **So you weren't chalking the days off on the wall?**
RR: [Laughs] No, it wasn't like prison or anything.

RC: **Do you have a favourite exercise routine that *MF* readers could incorporate into their training?**
RR: There's an abs circuit that I do after each and every training session [see above]. I never think, "I have to do this workout now." Whenever my coach is done, it's abs time. I don't even think about it. It takes no mental effort or motivation. It's just like having a shower.

RC: **Your diet used to consist of a single meal a day, which seems insane given your workload. But you've now teamed up with famed MMA dietitian and *MF* September cover guy Mike Dolce. How has his guidance helped your endurance and recovery?**
RR: I'm eating more than I ever did before. Mike does a great job of keeping me constantly satisfied, to the point where even after I make weight I don't have cravings. The reason I don't crave anything is because I know my body's nutritional needs are being met. It's a nice



Pushing the limits: *No-one trains harder or smarter.*



Time to submit: *Rousey demonstrates her power on the floor.*

"I feel like I'm the most complete mixed martial artist, and that in this sport, I'm the better striker."

feeling. Normally when I'm in fight camp, I'll have a chia bowl in the morning, scrambled eggs after my first training session, turkey chilli after my second, then yoghurt before bed. That's about it – and it keeps me full all of the time.

RC: **Is your weight cut to 61kg easier as well?**
RR: It's totally easy. I don't even think about it as being hard, because it's delegated to someone else. Previously, the hardest part was the guesswork – should I be eating this or that? And constantly making deals with myself about what I'd do later if I ate this thing now. These days, I just tell Mike how much I'm working out and what I need to weigh on a certain date.

RC: **He's your food coach.**
RR: That's it! He's my food coach and it really makes things easier. I love that man.

RC: **If one of the fighters I train was going up against a world-class boxer like Holly Holm, I'd be drilling them in takedowns and ground control in a bid to avoid her stand-up game as much as possible, but I have a feeling you'd like to finish her with strikes just to make a statement...**
RR: [Laughs] Well...I'm definitely not going to shy away from the striking. I have a lot of respect for Holly, so I won't be reckless, but I'm not scared of her striking at all. I feel like I'm the most complete mixed martial artist and that, in this sport, I'm the better striker. But I know that's something I have to prove and I intend on doing just that.

RC: **Finally, we've discussed the many things you do right, but if you were going to allow yourself a cheat meal, what would it be?**
RR: Oh, God, my favourite food indulgence is buffalo wings, extra-hot sauce and chunky blue-cheese dressing, with a frosty glass of apple cider. ■

Star power

UFC President Dana White on Ronda's unique appeal.

Richie Cranny: Dana, how do you feel about Ronda Rousey being the first woman to make the front cover of *Men's Fitness*?
Dana White: That is badass! I guess it makes sense because although there's never been a woman on *Men's Fitness* before, there's never been a woman like Ronda. That's a really fucking cool concept.

RC: Can you talk about how important she is for the UFC – and for women in general?
DW: Ronda is, in every sense of the word, a game-changer. I'd never seen a scenario where a woman could kick so many men's asses, but now there is one. That and her personality, her intelligence, everything else about her, makes her a super role model and a very empowering figure. She changes the way men look at women, the way women look at themselves and what young girls think is possible.

RC: Will Ronda pack out Etihad Stadium in November?
DW: People ask if I'm confident Ronda can sell out 70,000 seats. Of course I have confidence in Ronda, but I also have confidence in Australia. Can you believe 8% of the attendees at the Conor McGregor title fight in Las Vegas [UFC 189] were from here? That's huge!

RC: How's your own training these days?
DW: No matter where we go in the world, we have a gym lined up and usually head straight there when we arrive. It keeps me sane. And I like to eat, man, so I have to work out. I do my cardio, I do my weights, I feel good and my clothes fit. I'm not looking for a sixpack – I'm just looking to not get fat and not get hurt.



Sam Kaplan

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"I've always considered myself a very active person. I played in a men's summer soccer league, I surf, I take part in weekly kickboxing & Jiu-Jitsu classes, all the while having exercise & cardio regimens at my local gym on a semi daily basis.

My diet and nutrition have always been consistent even though I often ate on the run. I used the principles most people are familiar with... Eat good proteins, eat your greens, and try to keep the junk food intake to a minimum. But yet still, I never had the six pack I've always wanted.



It wasn't till I saw Mike Dolce and Thiago Alves on TV at a fight weigh in that the light bulb went off to try something out of my normal routine and follow a diet. Summer was coming up in a month and I wanted that body, so I started **3 Weeks To Shredded** and the rest was history."

– Robert, 3 Weeks To Shredded

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Adventures



2016

As a man of action, always thinking of new and more exciting ways to challenge himself, it's now time to start plotting bigger, better adventures for next year. Don't worry, though, we've got you covered. We tapped dozens of the world's top operators to come up with 2016's definitive list of outsized adventures — hiking, biking, paddling, surfing and mountaineering trips in the wildest blue yonders. From fat-biking across Greenland's Arctic tundra to walking with the wildlife (the kind that can — *gulp* — eat you) in Tanzania, these trips will give you a fantastic workout — and, more importantly, perspective. The world is smaller than ever, but it's much bigger than your drab grey cubicle. Time to bust the hell out and see it.

The Men's Fitness Guide to Action Vacations By Peter Koch

of your life,



Get lost in the Arctic. *Fat-biking Greenland's 160km hut-to-hut route is the definition of a remote vacation.*



Roll out the barrels. *Teahupo'o is a surfing mecca fullstop.*



New frontiers

Be the first to explore



Havana good time. *Divers can make hardcore mates in Cuba's blue waters.*

Just because the world has been mapped doesn't mean there are no new adventures left. Powerful forces — politics, violence, climate change, natural disaster — are constantly redrawing those maps, opening up new frontiers for adventure travel. These trips explore some of the planet's most incredible land- and waterscapes, which circumstances have preserved in a near-pristine state. See them now, before the crowds descend.

Fat-bike the Arctic

In honour of Canada-based Sacred Rides' 20th year, owner Mike Brcic has put together a first-of-its-kind fat-bike journey across the least densely populated terrain on the globe. To call the 160km hut-to-hut route over Greenland's Arctic Circle Trail "remote" is an understatement. The trail will still be covered with snow when the dogsled-aided trip rolls out next April, and the only other souls on it will likely be reindeer, Arctic foxes and musk oxen. Brcic calls Greenland "a spectacular country with a rich history and virtually no tourists".

> **April; 9 days, from about $7,000; *sacredrides.com***

Walk on Bolivia's moonscape

Years of unrest kept Bolivian tourism in check, and today this landlocked country is one of South America's best-kept secrets. In addition to Amazon jungles and Andean peaks, it's also home to the 4,000m Altiplano plateau, where Chilean company Explora runs remote camps. This eight-day journey explores the dramatic landscape with hikes up active volcanoes, down to flamingo-studded lakes, and out onto the world's largest salt flats, where cactus-encrusted islands rise up from the white, salty "sea".

> **Apr.–Nov.; 8 days, from about $8,000; *explora.com***

Surf Teahupo'o

The most famous surf break in the world demands the attention of every thrillseeker at some point in their danger-loving lives. The village of Teahupo'o is located on the south-west coast of Tahiti and it's massive, glassy waves often reach in excess of 3m. Of course, even if you can't cut it on locomotive-strength barrels, you can still sample Tahiti's beautiful beaches and accommodation. Impress your other half with an overwater bungalow at Bora Bora while you pluck dinner out of the water with your bare hands.

> ***surftravel.com.au, tahiti.intercontinental.com, tahitinow.com.au***

Dive Cuba's underwater treasure

The first thing divers notice in the Gardens of the Queen, an archipelago of coral and mangrove islands off the coast of Cuba, are the big fish – Caribbean reef sharks and 90kg grouper – that thrive at this comparably pristine reef established by Fidel Castro (himself a diver) as the Caribbean's largest marine-protected area and a no-take fishing zone. Just 1,000 divers are allowed to visit each year; you can be one of them on an Ocean Doctor 11-day dive trip led by marine biologist David Guggenheim.

> **Year-round; 11 days, from about $10,000; *oceandoctor.org***

Canyoning in the Cradle Mountain

Thanks to all those well-meaning but badly-dressed environmentalists, Tassie still has a lot of pristine scenery and forest to crawl, cartwheel and go mental through. The 1,545m Cradle Mountain offers swimming, jumping and abseiling opportunites in ancient canyons far from the maddening crowd. Cradle Mountain Canyons has a variety of safe, adrenaline-pumping tours for all ages and abilities, and abseiling is taught to newbies, so you won't get left hanging from some inhospitable crag.

> **$105–$210; cradlemountaincanyons.com.au/**

Previous spread: Martin Bassig; This page: from top: Salt Shots; David Doubilet / Getty



At the tail end of a six-day hike to Machu Picchu, there lies food, wine and a hot tub.

Courtesy of Mountain Lodge of Peru

The classics, done right

Check it off the bucket list

They're called "classic" because they're the quintessential adventures — getting personal with wild beasts in Africa, mushing sled dogs over frozen tundra, and marching on Machu Picchu — that should be on every man's bucket list. These four trips get it right, putting you right in the centre of the action, no matter how remote it is.

Kite surfing in New Caledonia

Because it's just two-and-half hours from the Australian east coast, you can flip the bird to the boss at 11am and be smashing cocktails by the beach at 2pm. Yep, New Caledonia is the bomb, and even though it's got a touch of classic French style, it is down to earth enough for you to totally go nuts. Between November and March trade winds blow hard and consistently, making perfect conditions for kite surfing and watching pretty locals chase their towels. You can also check the Airwaves Noumea Dream pro windsurfing tournament at Anse Vata [Nov. 24-29].

> *zephyrkitetours.com, airwaves-noumeadream cup.nc, au.aircalin.com*

Earn admission to Machu Picchu

"Salkantay" means "savage mountain" in Quechua, the language of the Incas, and this trek to Machu Picchu is, indeed, savage compared with the more casual – and crowded – Inca Trail. Six days of hiking take you from Alpine passes overlooking mountaintop glaciers, to jungle-filled river valleys, and finally to the ancient city in the sky. The hard work pays off even more when you reach your Mountain Lodges of Peru quarters, with their hot showers, gourmet food and wine.

> Mar.–Dec.; 7 days, from about $4,500; *mountainlodges ofperu.com*

Lead the pack across Lapland

A lot of dogsledding trips are really just glorified sleigh rides – you sit on the sled and gawk at the snow while your musher handles the dogs. Not so with Nature Travels' backcountry journey across Sweden's Vindelfjällen Nature Reserve, one of Europe's largest protected areas. You drive your own sled – braking on downhills and running behind when the route ramps up – feed and care for your own dogs, and help with chores. This is a wilderness trek, but with a Swedish dogsled champ's expert help.

> Mar.–Apr.; 8 days, from about $3,300; *naturetravels.co.uk*

Walk on the wild side in Tanzania

For the ultimate African wilderness experience, ditch the Land Rover and join Mark Thornton Safaris on a 100km walking safari across Tanzania's 2.2 million-hectare Ruaha National Park. Harking back to the original foot safaris, these excursions bring you face to face with the animals – elephants, lions and hippos, oh, my! – at ground level, on their terms. And, unlike softer "luxury" walks, this one explores the truly wild corners of the park, with no infrastructure, no roads, no tourist-packed buses.

> 8 days, from about $8,500; *thorntonsafaris.com*



Sharking mad! *Swim with the fishes in Tahiti.*



Fresh takes on age-old journeys

Find a world of surprises

Already crashed through the Grand Canyon? Topped out on Mount Rainier? Lift-biked the Swiss Alps? For the been-there-done-that crowd, these novel trips riff on the classics, offering thrilling new perspectives on old adventure staples.

Swim with sharks in Tahiti

We're not talking man-munching great whites, rather harmless reef sharks and stingrays, which you can snorkel with at your leisure in the crystal-blue waters surrounding Tahiti. It will take you two-and-a-half hours on a *tahiti.com* tour to gain these massive bragging rights, and when you finish, you will be happily "stranded" on an island great 19th Century French painters described as having the prettiest women in the world. What's not to like?

> **Shark and stingray snorkelling *tahiti.com; tahitinow.com.au***

Get on Board with Belize

Travellers flock to snorkel, dive and fish in the clear turquoise waters of Belize's more than 295km long barrier reef. Still, there are hidden corners in this ecosystem, like the South Water Caye Marine Reserve, where Island Expeditions runs what may be the world's first inn-to-inn stand-up paddleboard trip. Based out of laid-back island lodges, the journey balances snorkelling and open-water crossings – where you can see stingrays, nurse sharks and sea turtles.

> **Jan.-Mar.; 7 days, from about $2,500; *islandexpeditions.com***

Peak-bag the Cascade classics

This madcap expedition from Seattle's Mountain Madness tackles three Cascade summits and a total of 7,000m of elevation gain in a week. Individually, the routes are fairly beginner friendly, with roped glacier travel, low-grade climbing and route-finding through icefalls. Consider it a crash course in mountaineering, with on-the-fly training to make sure you summit in one piece. Make sure you are fit – only the strong survive.

> **July-Aug.; 7 days, from about $2,490; *mountainmadness.com***

Storm Slovenia's Julian Alps

Bombing down Slovenia's rugged Julian Alps is a lot like biking in the Italian Alps – minus the crowds. Though it's one of the continent's most forested and water-rich countries, Slovenia is only now being discovered by outdoor junkies as a cheaper, quieter European alternative. This seven-day H+I Adventures trip covers the best trails – from Alpine passes to seaside cliffs – while making forays into Italy and Austria.

> **June-Sept.; 8 days, from about $3,100; *mountainbikeworldwide.com***

Run the canyons of the Colorado

Retrace 425km of explorer John Wesley Powell's 1869 wild ride of discovery down the Green and Colorado rivers on an epic new trip from Grand Canyon Dories. Over two weeks, guides navigate historic wooden boats through rapids between the Technicolor walls of Desolation, Gray, Labyrinth and Stillwater canyons, building up to the churning waves of Cataract Canyon. "Inferior boats are mashed like eggshells," wrote Powell of the rapids. These boats are topnotch.

> **May-June; 13 days, from about $5,000; *oars.com***



Climb every mountain. *Learn the ropes here, with a crash course in climbing at America's Cascade Range.*

Trekking across snow-spattered mountains with buddies is a great way to test mateship and endurance.



Everest of trips. *Base Camp will blow your mind.*



Tropical route. *Going hard in New Caledonia.*

On a mission

Test your mettle

For masochists (we're looking at you, Ironmen, ultrarunners, endurance cyclists and gnarly-ass mountain men) who want to accomplish something tangible on holiday (and bring home bragging rights), these trips offer goal-oriented adventure with a generous side of suffering. Trust us, it's more rewarding than you think — and twice as much fun as you can imagine.

Trail run through tropical New Caledonia

Hook in a mate and a gal pal for a two-day, 64km hike through the lush mountains of Australia's closest French-speaking neighbour. Teams are limited to three, and participants bash out 37km on day one and 27km on day two. Along the way, you'll see Melanesian tribes and some of the island's exotic native flora and fauna, plus the occasional knackered rival. The race takes place every year in July, which is the cooler, drier season, so start practising for it now.

> ***transcal.ile.nc/*; fly there with Aircalian, *au.aircalin.com***

Trek to Everest Base Camp

The ultimate bucket list tick-off, trekking to Base Camp has all the glory and adventure of a climb to the peak but without the obvious dangers. Explore the mountains and valleys around Everest, rest in Nepalese teahouses, learn about the traditions and cultures of the famous Sherpa and kick back in exotic Kathmandu. Alternatively, you can hit the awesome Annapurnas. Intrepid will donate all 2015/16 season profits back to Nepal to help the country rebuild from the April earthquake.

> **$1334/person, 15 days, including 12 trekking; 1300 797 010, *intrepidtravel.com/return-nepal***

Run around the roof of Africa

Kilimanjaro, the 5,895m Roof of Africa, is a top mountaineering destination. But for a tougher, more intimate experience with the mountain, join world-class ultrarunner Simon Mtuy's Summit Expeditions & Nomadic Experience for a 259km circumnavigation of the peak. The gruelling trail run follows footpaths through forests and over countless ridges, covering at least a half-marathon every day. Keeping up with the speedy Tanzanian, who was raised here, isn't easy, but the gorgeous scenery is a great tradeoff.

> **Aug.; 11 days, from $2,125; *nomadicexperience.com***

Ride the Rocky Mountain Front

Glacier National Park's soaring Alpine Going-to-the-Sun Road is one of America's most beautiful bike rides. But it's only the warmup to this weeklong trip with Montana's the Cycling House. Next, the tour parallels the Rocky Mountain Front down to Yellowstone, through some of the most gorgeous scenery in the Lower 48. Let your legs do the work – there's plenty of it, with daily tolls averaging more than 115km – and keep your eyes peeled for grizzlies, wolves and elk along the way. It's the great American road trip, only on a bike.

> **July; 7 days, from $1,595; *thecyclinghouse.com***

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Lagoons of New Caledonia: Reef Diversity and Associated Ecosystems inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2008

Say hello to your neighbour:

NEW CALEDONIA!

New Caledonia is one of the closest Pacific neighbours to Australia and yet many Aussies still don't know much about this island destination right next door.

If you love an active holiday, New Caledonia can be your adventure playground. The warm water of the lagoon, its underwater treasures and the trade winds that rock the coast all seasons, offer a wide range of activities - all set amongst the spectacular natural scenery of New Caledonia.

Discover why Noumea is known as the windsurfing capital of the world or head to the North of the main island for trail running, mountain biking, rock climbing, fishing, hiking, horse trekking, quad bike tours, and much more... For thrillseekers, the choice is vast and spicy!

Flying direct from Australia with Aircalin you can be in New Caledonia in just two hours from Brisbane, less than three hours from Sydney and under four hours from Melbourne; the short flying times make this Pacific island the perfect adventure getaway close to home.

To find out more, visit **www.new-caledonia.com.au** and book your flights at **Aircalin.com**



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The war

How do you defeat obesity? Just telling people to eat less and exercise more



on fat

isn't working. *MF* finds the winning strategy. By Joel Snape



Dangerous terrain: *You won't win this battle with junk food and other lazy options close by.*

Photography Henry Carter

The government, campaigners and the fitness industry are on the front line of the war against fat – but at the moment, they're losing. Despite all efforts, people are getting fatter, with forecasts suggesting more than half of Aussie men will be overweight or obese by 2030. *MF* consults doctors, nutritionists and trainers to find out what we can do to halt the impending bloat and make Australia lean again. The fightback starts here...

STRATEGY #1
RECRUIT 'EM YOUNG

Remember what you learnt about health at school? Don't worry, neither does anyone else. "We need to focus far more on educating kids about healthy living," says nutritionist Scott Baptie. "When I was at school, I learnt how to make pineapple upside-down pudding in home economics class. Obviously, I've never made one since. Kids would benefit far more from learning the nutrition basics: the macronutrients – protein, carbs and fat – and where to get them, how we digest food, the energy balance equation, what to eat before and after sport, and how to cook practical, healthy meals." Plus, of course, there's the physical side. "The school day should include activity – every day," says doctor and health campaigner Joseph Lightfoot.

YOUR MISSION: Did home economics classes – if you even took them – leave you unprepared for the realities of fuelling a healthy life? Mercifully, technology has moved on. Use the My Macros+ app (*getmymacros.com*) to set your carb, protein and fat counts according to your goals, and Supercook (*supercook.com*) to search recipes by whatever's left in the fridge.



STRATEGY #2
WIN THE PROPAGANDA WAR

Information overload is the enemy, and the men in charge aren't helping. "The government has lost credibility with the consumer," says nutrition expert and author Ben Coomber (*bencoomber.com*). "[Nutritional info] needs to be updated based on science, and health-related apps should be improved and promoted. If people can easily track their heartrate, blood pressure, calorie intake and stress levels, they can make informed decisions."

It's not just the government that's behind the times – you should always be careful who you listen to. "I think those who dispense nutrition advice should be better regulated," says Baptie. "This would help cut the confusion and reduce the vast amount of misinformation and unscientific advice perpetuated by self-appointed gurus."

YOUR MISSION: If you've got the cash, the new Healbe GoBe (*healbe.com*) claims to be the first smartband that can track blood pressure, heartrate and calories consumed (by measuring glucose levels in your skin), letting you swap hearsay for hard science. Not an option? Swap outdated food plans for the Samurai Diet, which has the twin advantages of being more glamorous and scientifically valid: unlimited colourful vegetables, protein at every meal and non-processed carbs before training.

STRATEGY #3
MANOEUVRE AROUND JUNK

Junk food taxes have mixed results. France's surcharge on sugary soft drinks and New York's trans fat ban have seen reductions in consumption, but Denmark's tax on saturated fats introduced in 2011 was impractical, arguably misguided and ditched after a year. Studies suggest that junk food would need to cost over 20% more to reduce consumption, but is a price rise



really the solution? "Convenience food will never change," says Coomber. "A demand for it will always be there, so the best option is continue to work with supermarkets and restaurants to improve the healthy status of their meals. That way people will continue to have better options." Taking confectionary away from checkout areas is a start, as is better labelling.

YOUR MISSION: If society isn't going to take charge, you'll need to do it yourself. First, acknowledge that the "within sight" effect is real: according to research from Cornell University in the US, keeping junk food close at hand measurably increases consumption, so hide the biscuits and keep a Granny Smith within reach at all times. Can't avoid the siren call of the snack aisle? Psychology researcher Nicole Mead advises adopting the internal phrase "Not now, but later" to postpone temptation until you're out of the danger zone.

STRATEGY #4
FIND ADVANTAGEOUS TERRAIN

In the modern era, rather than simply dictating behaviour, government departments have taken to trying to modify it through positive reinforcement and indirect suggestions. So can such methods work to curb something like biscuit consumption? Well, possibly. "Making towns and cities more 'active' so that walking somewhere or taking a bike is the quickest and easiest option, not an unsafe hassle, would help," says Lightfoot. "It's also possible to use everyday design to change activity behaviours – for example, hiding lifts while making the stairs obvious. If stairs and escalators are next to each other, the stairs won't get used." Trainer Andy McKenzie has a more left-field suggestion, pointing to the sedentary lives of TV role models and asking if we can do something to make their influence healthier.

YOUR MISSION: While you're waiting for architects to join the struggle, program your brain via If>Then thinking and automate good behaviour. "Set up cues that prompt your planned behaviour," says social psychologist Mark Conner of the University of Leeds in the UK. "For instance, if I have to use an escalator, then I'll walk up it." Bonus: this conserves willpower, so you'll have plenty left for turning down after-work beverages.

STRATEGY #5
OFFICER TRAINING

You might feel like you're tied to your desk, but there are other options. "Get rid of the 'office desk' culture," says Lightfoot. "I'd like to see offices where you walk while having meetings, stand up to discuss ideas and have variety in workstations so you avoid sitting all the time. Companies can also help employees become or stay healthy through discounts and incentives."

YOUR MISSION: Firstly, tell whoever's in charge that Steve Jobs and Mark Zuckerberg instituted walking meetings for a reason. According to a Stanford University study, they boost creativity by more than 60%. If the powers that be still aren't going for it, take the initiative and stand up every 15 minutes to avoid your glutes shutting down, connective tissue tightening and circulation suffering. Sign up to *habitforge.com*, which will email you daily to check your progress.

STRATEGY #6
WIN HEARTS AND MINDS

Preaching isn't effective, or much fun for anyone. "We need to inspire people on a bigger level – saying people need to eat healthier and move more isn't enough," says Coomber. "We need to find people's 'Whys' – why should they move more? Why should they exercise? We need to release people's internal motivators to want to do this. Once people want to change, they will – but they need to be given that impetus."

YOUR MISSION: Don't resist habits – change them. A study from Duke University in the US found that 40% of participants' daily actions were the result not of conscious decisions but of ingrained habits. You haven't got the brain-space to make a decision on everything you do, so make your ingrained habits good ones, and you'll conserve your energy for lasting change. ■



Shaking things up: *Nutritional info should be regulated, to stop consumers drowning in poor advice.*

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Dual blend whey protein powder

Available in 3 sizes – 4kg, 2kg and 400g, and in 5 delicious flavours – Chocmint Supreme, Chocolate Supreme, Iced Coffee Latte, Vanilla Delight and White Chocolate Raspberry.



NUTRITION INFORMATION APPROXIMATE SERVINGS

Per Serve (1scoop)	Quantity per serve
Energy	620 kJ
Protein	24.5 g
Fat, total	1.9 g
- saturated	1.2 g
Carbohydrate	7.5 g
- sugars	6.8 g
Sodium	85 mg

AMINO ACID ANALYSIS

Serving size: 38g Essential	Quantity per serve
Isoleucine	1242mg
Leucine	2077 mg
Lysine	1578 mg
Methionine	420 mg
Phenylalanine	621 mg
Threonine	1478 mg
Tryptophan	389 mg
Valine	1156 mg
Non- Essential	
Histidine	363 mg
Alanine	1036 mg
Arginine	547 mg
Aspartic Acid	2102 mg
Cystine	531 mg
Glutamic Acid	3409 mg
Glycine	386 mg
Proline	1175 mg
Serine	1059 mg
Tyrosine	647 mg

All values are considered averages unless otherwise indicated.

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HARDCORE FIGHT SPECIAL

Rock star games

UFC #1 middleweight contender **Luke Rockhold** is known as a fun-loving party guy, but he takes fighting very seriously – as champ Chris Weidman will discover when they do battle on Dec. 13 at UFC 194. *MF* meets the man who's a player in every sense.

Tornado kicks are hard. Not only is the technique difficult to nail – it combines a leaping kick with a 540° spin – but the dynamic movement makes it hard to photograph as well. That's why UFC star Luke Rockhold has done 48 in a row at our photoshoot and we still haven't got the perfect shot. Our art director suggests one more attempt and Rockhold nonchalantly fires off his 49th perfect kick. This time we get it – you can see the result opposite. Naturally, it's only after we're finished that Rockhold mentions one of his toes is broken. This is a unique fighter who has a way of making the hardest things look easy.

By the horns

Luke Rockhold has a rep for being a little different to the rest of the world's elite mixed martial artists. The 30-year-old Californian isn't just a contender in one of the UFC's most stacked divisions with a knack for first-round finishes – he lives a lifestyle that would put all but the most diehard adrenaline junkies to shame. How many people do you know who'd charge down a full-grown bull?

"I was out in Costa Rica and went to a bull festival," Rockhold explains. "Every once in a while a couple of locals would jump in and run away from the bull." Initially Rockhold's sense of self-preservation held out. "I remember thinking, 'There's no way I'm going to jump in,'" he says. "But after a little of the guaro [a Central American spirit] and whatever else we were drinking, it was just something I had to do. I took a swig from the bottle, gave my friend my camera and then pretty much just jumped over the fence."

Obviously, Rockhold didn't trouble to look into the arena before he jumped in and ended up finding himself face-to-face with the biggest bull of the night. Not that it troubled him too much. "I just ran at the thing," he recalls. "I tried to fake going right, then left. He just put his horns down and tried to take a piece off my ass."

The bull missed, but only just. "He whiffed by me – he was literally within inches of goring my leg," says Rockhold, laughing. "Man, my butt was puckered up." He made a dash to the fence to be pulled out by his anxious friends. "I expected my buddies to be all excited about it but they were freaking out on me." He pauses. "I'll never do that again. I mean, I was wearing Vans with no shoelaces."

Close to the edge

It's not all duelling bovine death machines in Central America, though. Rockhold's Twitter feed is an illuminating window into his world, whether it's posting selfies with Will Ferrell at the World Cup or being snapped hanging out with five UFC Octagon Girls or singer Taylor Swift. In fact, you get the impression Rockhold is a hit with the fairer sex. UFC President Dana White refers to him as "that handsome one" and it seems that a lot of his stories start with him in the company of "a couple of girls".

"I do have some good stories," admits Rockhold. "One 4th of July weekend I was out in California with a couple of girls. We were walking down a little road right on the cliffside and we went past about five or six guys getting rowdy. They said something to me and I said something back. Next thing I knew, it was them versus me. I kinda started fighting all of them, throwing roundhouse kicks and crazy stuff."

Rockhold found himself backed up to the edge of the cliff with a 20-25m drop onto jagged rocks. Then he went over the edge.

Words Joel Snape Photography Mark Harrison Art direction Ped Millichamp



14–2

Rockhold has only lost twice (once at a higher weight class) and is currently riding a four-fight win streak.

TWO

He successfully defended his Strikeforce middleweight belt twice before the organisation was absorbed into the UFC.

10 of Luke's 14 victories have come in the first round (three by KO, seven by submission).



"It was one of those things when you've been drinking and you can't explain everything that goes down," says the #1 contender. "I remember getting swarmed by the guys, being pushed and flipping off the edge. Somehow I landed just like Spider-Man on this tiny ledge about 10ft [3m] down the cliff. I was stuck there." As you might imagine, the fight was quickly forgotten as Rockhold disappeared. "Everyone ran over expecting to see a dead man at the bottom of the cliff and I was right there. Then they were all trying to help me up, even the guys I'd been fighting. They thought they'd killed me. It somehow all worked out."

Enjoy the ride

Rockhold doesn't tell this as a cautionary tale – it's just a good story. In fact, as he's telling it he's playing around with a skateboard in the photo studio, landing a frontside pop shove-it. So far he's only smashed one glass. "If there's a skateboard in front of me, I can't help myself. I like to jump on," he says as *MF* hastily clears away the shards. "Skateboarding is a little risky for someone like me, but..." He shrugs. "I like to surf when I can as well."

Rockhold says surfing provides him a welcome break from life at the gym. "It's a good workout and it's refreshing to get out of the gym," he enthuses.

If it seems as if Rockhold is joking his way through life and MMA success has been a fluke, think again. He may know how to have fun but there's a serious work ethic that's underlined his success in the cage. He comes from a family of athletes, which fostered a competitive attitude in him from a young age. "My dad was a professional basketball player and my mom was a hell of a tennis player," says the fighter. "And my older brother Matt is a professional surfer. Being the youngest, I always felt I needed to live up to their achievments."

Self starter

That competitive edge is evident in his attitude towards training. For one thing, Rockhold oversees his own strength, conditioning and nutrition, saying that he feels a lot of coaches' programs don't really work for him. "I pick and choose from guys I like. I've made my own deal and I follow my own program," he says.

Nutrition is crucial in a sport governed by weight classes and Rockhold feels it's an area that many MMA fighters don't take seriously enough. "People just have no idea what they're putting into their body. You have to have a varied diet – your carb base, your vegetables and your protein, everything," he says. "I just don't see how it is possible to be a vegetarian or vegan when you break your body down so much. You have to recover. You need those proteins and proper amino acids, like leucine, which only really comes from animal fats."

As well as keeping a close eye on his diet, Rockhold believes his work ethic in the gym is unparalleled. "I don't think anybody [in the middleweight division] is more conditioned or more prepared than me. I feel like I train harder and smarter than anybody out there," he says. "I've got a lot of natural talent and I'm not wasting it. I push harder than anybody in my gym and anybody I have ever been around. I'm going to keep that mentality. This is my dream and I'm not going to let anyone take it from me."

Title talk

Rockhold's confidence is more than just tough talk. He's displayed his conditioning in the cage, most notably when he wrested the Strikeforce middleweight title from world-class submission artist Ronaldo "Jacaré" Souza in a five-round battle. "I didn't really know what Jacaré was capable of but I just knew that I wanted to win the title, so I gave every last bit of myself," says Rockhold. "I wasn't going to let him stop me in the later rounds. Actually, I think my conditioning was what really won me that fight. I outlasted him with that determination."

It was the first time Rockhold had been beyond the opening round in his entire professional career. "That was an amazing feeling – I cried a little," he says of his title victory. "I've never cried after a fight before but I couldn't help it. As soon as they announced 'and the new...' I just started bawling."

So just how good is Rockhold? Well, he's won four of his five bouts in the UFC, and the lone man to beat him, Vitor Belfort, has since been in trouble for performance-enhancing drug use. If Rockhold can comprehensively defeat champion Chris Weidman at UFC 194 in December, it'll be hard for anyone to deny he's the top middleweighter [Rockhold is 191cm and 84kg] on the planet.

Of course, there'll alway be some who say Rockhold needs to dethrone Weidman and then win a rematch with Belfort to really prove himself the best, but that's fine with the Californian. "I think that the guy's been cheating his whole career, but it's not an excuse for me to lose that fight," he states. "The simple fact is Vitor is a cheater and I don't respect him for that – I want to fight him again and beat him for the purity of the sport."

Righteous path

Cheating is one of the few subjects that makes Rockhold's relaxed demeanour fade. He says you can tell when someone is on drugs as soon as you fight them. "They have kind of freakish, explosive strength," Rockhold says. "But it only lasts so long.

Work out like Luke Try Rockhold's five-minute continuous conditioning blitz.

Airdyne bike

Time 1min

"Keep the Airdyne at 85rpm or higher. Close to a fight, it will be in the 90s. Go as hard as you can." (Rest for 15sec after this and each other exercise.)



Pad work

Time 1min

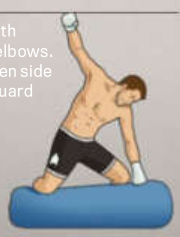
"Work on different combinations, including body shots. Focus on your footwork."



Ground and pound

Time 1min

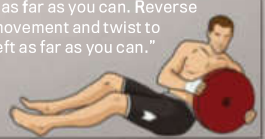
"Rain down with punches and elbows. Switch between side control, half guard and mount."



Weighted Russian twist

Time 1min

"Sit with your knees bent and your feet just off the floor. With both hands, hold the sides of a weight plate. Brace your core and rotate your torso to the right as far as you can. Reverse the movement and twist to the left as far as you can."





Luke dominated Brazilian legend Lyoto Machida when they met at UFC on FOX 15 in April, winning by submission in the second round and picking up a $50K Performance of the Night bonus.

"I started fighting all six of them. Then I fell off the cliff."

If you get through the initial burst of strength they die quicker than anybody else." But it's not just the physical advantages steroids bring that upset him. "It's the feeling of invincibility these guys get from the stuff, it gives them super, super confidence," he says. Confidence is a huge part of fighting. Doubt yourself and your techniques will fail. "I think confidence is the biggest thing for a lot of these guys."

When you've been in the sport a long time, Rockhold reveals, you hear things. "I think quite a few guys are using some form of performance-enhancing drugs," he says. "It needs to be regulated with blood tests and people need to be punished. I could never cheat, I just couldn't live with myself, and I have no respect for the people that do."

Fortunately for Rockhold, there's now more testing and harsher penalties for wrong-doers than ever before. But the anti-cheating statement above sums him up. He's the guy that'll party as hard as anyone. When it comes to competition, though, he wants to win and he wants to win clean. And if he can snag the UFC middleweight belt, it's going to be his best story yet. ■

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Biohacking for beginners

Biology has gone DIY. "Biohackers" tinker with their own bodies and record the results in the hope of getting fitter, happier and more productive. *MF* tests the most popular hacks so that you can try it yourself.

By Matt Huckle

Wake up instantly

THE THEORY

◆ As late-night Netflix gets better and your bedtime gets pushed further and further back, the snooze button's lure becomes harder to ignore – but by letting your sleeping hours get more erratic, you're making the problem worse, not better. "There are three principles to good sleep," says Dr Rebecca Robbins, a sleep researcher at Cornell University in the US. "The first is quantity – most adults need seven to eight hours. The second is consistency – change your bedtime by more than an hour and your body will need time to adjust."

The third is getting sleep in one chunk. "Our sleeping body cycles through four phases followed by rapid eye movement (REM), which is where cognitive benefits are," says Robbins. "Wake too early and you rob yourself of that, and your memory suffers."

THE HACK

◆ The solution is twofold: first, fix your sleep, and then address your wake-up strategy. "Set an alarm for bedtime and stick to it," says Robbins. "Make sure you're dropping off at the same time every night – and do something relaxing, like reading fiction, for the last 30 minutes before bed."

With consistent sleep nailed, you're primed for an express wake-up. Devotees of self-improvement hub CNQR Academy (*conquer.today*) swear by the protein-caffeine-cold triple threat. Before bed you put some water with lots of ice, a scoop of whey protein and a 200mg caffeine pill by your bed. Set your alarm for 15 minutes before you need to be up, mix the protein and water, then down the lot. You'll jump-start all your body's processes (in theory, at least) and be ready to go in minutes.

MF VERDICT SLEEP HACKING

◆ I'm not a laptop-in-bed type, but I'm not the best sleeper either – inconsistent bedtimes and general anxiety mean I can spend hours fidgeting before I finally drift off. So, for me, the new sleep routine did far more good than the morning kick-starter. After a day or two of the same bedtime, getting eight hours a night, a 30-minute "power down" before bed and keeping my phone in aeroplane mode, sleep came much easier. But downing an ice-cold protein shake isn't the nicest way to start the day. The caffeine certainly woke me up but my energy dipped once its effects wore off. The take-home message? To improve your sleep, get into good habits rather than relying on quick gimmicks.

Photography Danny Bird



Snory hallelujah: *Consistency is the key to a decent night's sleep.*

Jump-start your fat loss

THE THEORY

◆ Intermittent fasting (IF) – or going without food for significant chunks of the day – can, according to its fans, lead to fat loss, improve health and possibly extend your lifespan. The downside? It can also leave you lethargic and energy-deprived. Dave Asprey, founder of *bulletproofexec.com*, thinks he has a solution: drinking buttered coffee, as favoured by Nepalese sherpas, which is meant to boost your metabolism and raise energy levels, while keeping the beneficial side effects.

THE HACK

◆ The Bulletproof Fasting template is simple enough: make sure you've finished all of your food by 8pm the night before you start, then kick off at 8am by drinking Bulletproof coffee. Train around lunchtime, then break your fast at 2pm and eat as much as you like until 8pm. "It's easier, and far more pleasant, to do a Bulletproof intermittent fast than a standard one," says Asprey. Homer Simpson comparisons are, unfortunately, inevitable.



Bulletproof coffee burns fat as an energy source instead of muscle.

MF VERDICT BULLETPROOF FASTING

◆ The first thing to note here is that buttered coffee is delicious: it goes down like an extra-silky latte. The second is that it works: intermittent fasting usually leaves me alternately sluggish and furious, but after a day's adjustment – I didn't use enough butter on day one – my steaming cups of grass-fed butter coffee left me surprisingly alert during a demanding work week.

The "concentration" effect might have been placebo, but there was an unexpected fringe benefit – without the highs and lows of a morning's carbs, I made better decisions at lunch and avoided afternoon biscuit binges entirely. I love bacon too much to try it long-term, but Bulletproof coffee's my new go-to for mornings on the go.

De-stress in seconds

THE THEORY

◆ Your heartrate might be fine, but what about its "coherence" – the rate at which it speeds up and slows down? If this isn't smooth, it's a warning sign. "When your heartrate is chaotic, your body is constantly stressing. It's like pressing a car's brake and accelerator at the same time," says stress coach Gavin Andrews. "You pool resources into your stress sensors and away from the part of the brain that lets you regulate emotions and make smart decisions."

THE HACK

◆ HeartMath (*heartmath.com/innerbalance/*) has a sensor called the Inner Balance, which connects to your phone. Use the app each day, relax and focus on your breathing. "You'll handle pressure and stress better, as well as improving your cognitive capacity," says Andrews. "After training it'll also trick your body into recovering quicker and releasing the hormone DHEA, which helps get rid of cortisol." This stress hormone also makes the body store fat, so it's a win-win.



Calm and get it: *If your heartrate isn't smooth, you have a problem.*

*MF*VERDICT HEARTRATE COHERENCE TRAINING

◆ I've never thought of myself as stressed, but the first time I used HeartMath's Inner Balance, I found that my blood boils at the least annoyance. I spent five minutes on the bus synchronising my breathing with the breath pacer and concentrated on positive, fluffy feelings – until I realised I'd missed my stop.

My next go was after a five-a-side soccer match. I spent 20 minutes earning 80% coherence and 267 points – the daily goal is 300. All that was undone the next day on a fraught commute, when I struggled to score just 60. The app helped me to slow my breath to keep stress in check and made me spend more time unwinding to reduce the damage stress does. If it wasn't so fiddly to use, I might have scored a bit higher.

Experience total calm

THE THEORY

◆ Life's barrage of external stimuli means that your brain is always working hard. Flotation tanks allow you to strip all of that away.
"The science shows that if you float in the quiet darkness motionless for about an hour your body almost can't help but go into a very deep relaxation," says flotation expert Peter Bell. "Studies have shown flotation decreases cortisol, lactate and adrenaline."

THE HACK

◆ Flotation sessions are normally around an hour long. "Around 50% of people experience a noticeable shift in their stress levels after the first session," says Bell, who recommends a couple of sessions in your first week followed by one every other week. "Flotation improves circulation and how well your body distributes oxygen and nutrients around the body," he says. If nothing else, it's a chance to get away from the kids.



Sensory underload: *A device such as the flotation tank enables brains to switch off.*

*MF*VERDICT SENSORY REST

◆ Floating in a pitch-black, soundproof pod is scientifically known as sensory REST (restricted environmental stimulation therapy), and it more than lived up to the name. It was phenomenally relaxing.

Stepping naked into the space-age pod was daunting – as the hydraulic-assisted door closed, I imagined re-emerging after an hour to a post-apocalyptic future. Soothing music eroded that worry while ambient light shifted through the colour spectrum. Once the music stopped, I turned off the light and floated silently atop the Epsom salts-filled water.

An hour flew by. I'm not sure how much magnesium sulphate I absorbed, but afterwards I definitely felt totally relaxed – physically and mentally. I'd do it again like a very mellow shot.

De-stress in seconds

THE THEORY

◆ People who experience constant vibration, such as heavy machinery operators and big truck drivers, have reported that it causes back pain, but under more controlled circumstances, it could benefit your fitness. "Whole-body vibration (WBV) makes you feel heavier than you actually are," says yoga expert Nahid De Belgeonne. "As the ground 'falls away', your brain thinks you're falling so your muscle fibres lengthen and contract fast." WBV training has been shown to improve strength and explosive power. "The most immediate benefit is range of motion," says De Belgeonne. "It increases range of motion by about 7°. So you can lunge further on a WBV platform than you could on the floor."

THE HACK

◆ The most popular WBV system is the PowerPlate – it's the product De Belgeonne uses – and there are locations all over the country where you can try it for yourself. Sessions are typically in the form of a class so you'll be guided through the best way to get the most out of it. "Muscular imbalances are a big factor in poor flexibility," says De Belgeonne. "WBV helps create equal muscle growth across your body. Everything in your body is connected. Sitting against the vibrating platform can work on all the muscle fibres and connective tissue along the back. That's important because feelings of tightness often aren't tight muscles but tight connective tissue, because we hold ourselves in the same position all day."



Whole-body vibration (WBV) training has been shown to improve strength and explosive power.

*MF*VERDICT WHOLE-BODY VIBRATION

◆ I suffer from tight glutes and hamstrings so I was keen to find out if WBV could aid my mobility and recovery. Within seconds of the start of my first Good Vibes PowerPlate class, my brain was rattling inside my skull as the machine whirred away at 30 vibrations per second. Thankfully the impact reduced significantly when I bent my knees, which helps distribute the vibrations more evenly throughout the body.

The vibrating platform forced me to engage my core to stay balanced, and by the end of the class I could feel the taut tissue around my hip joints loosening. The results weren't life-changing, but as a weekly add-on to help build core strength and improve recovery after sport or a lifting session, I'd recommend it. ■



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HOW TO BE A BETTER BLOKE

50 SKILLS EVERY MAN SHOULD MASTER





Some things are more important than a six-pack – like being able to tackle a cobbled downhill like Contador, paddle a kayak or just get knocked down and get up again. *MF* presents the real bucket list all men need to complete – when you can do all 50, then it'll be time to think about specialising.



01 Kayak in the rapids

The position of your hands will go a long way towards preventing damage to your shoulders. When you're paddling, make sure neither hand goes behind your shoulders or across the centre line of your body. This will maintain a rectangular shape with your arms and paddle, which is not only good for your shoulders but will also generate power for your strokes.



02 Fly the human flag

"The human flag requires strength and co-ordination of an unusual muscle activation pattern, namely pushing with one arm while pulling with the other," says performance mentor David Jackson. "Start with the vertical flag – you grip the pole with both hands but your feet are barely off the ground, reducing the force on your torso. Graduate to the tuck flag, with knees bent, and work up to the full version by putting out one leg at a time."

03 Sprint uphill

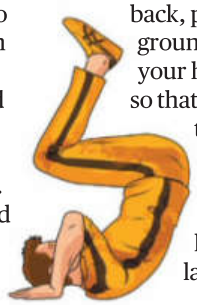
Stand tall – bending at the waist limits hip movement and hampers efficiency as well as reducing your ability to create power by stretching your leg behind you. "Gain contact with the floor by taking fast small steps," says professional running coach Gerald Smith. "And use your arms to boost your momentum."

04 Go downhill fast

Leaning backwards is good for slowing down, but don't overdo it. "Initially keep your bodyweight on your heels as this will help reduce your speed and maintain control," says Smith. "Once you're more confident, lean forward to take advantage of gravity. This is a great way to improve cadence [running steps per minute] if you are a sprinter."

05 Run off-road like a goat

While good running form usually has you looking ahead, you'll need to shift your gaze down when on the trails. Focus on the ground about six strides ahead so you can anticipate obstacles. And wear specialised trail-running shoes for extra support.



06 Kip up

Style it out and get up like Bruce Lee. Lying on your back, put your palms on the ground by your head. Roll your hips up off the floor so that your knees are close to your face. Explode upwards with your legs and push off powerfully with your hands so that you can land on your feet.



07 Sail over waist-high obstacles

Don't slow down as you approach the obstacle. Place one hand flat on top of it and shift weight from your feet to that arm's shoulder. Jump, kicking the leg opposite your supporting arm out to the side, and vault the obstacle. Land with that foot on the same side as your supporting arm and keep running.

08 Turn a proper cartwheel

They're not just for six-year-olds – mastery will translate to improved balance and spatial awareness. Lunge forward with your left leg, transferring your weight forward while placing your left, then right hand on the ground. Kick your right leg up into a sideways handstand with your legs apart in a V-shape. Your right leg should land first. Then lift your hands quickly.

09 Master the handstand

"Start against a wall," says Ashley Kalym, author of *Complete Calisthenics*. "Kicking up so that your back's against it is easier, but walking your feet up will help you get the right shape. Brace your abs and glutes to keep tension." Spread your fingers and grip the ground, and get used to rolling out of it. Once you're confident that you can mess up and recover, you'll kick up with confidence.

10 Do the pec dance

Beyond getting a good reaction, isolating and working individual muscles is an important skill as it'll translate into more control at the gym. Pay attention to how your pec muscles feel when they're tensed during a chest move. "Pinpointing this is how you'll learn to make your pecs dance," says Jackson. "And you'll need enough muscle to notice they are being activated." Next, think about moving your shoulder foward to tense the muscle.

11 Make the muscle-up look easy

Master the muscle-up – basically, a pullup combined with a dip – and you'll be able to clamber over any obstacle you can get your fingertips on. Learn it in a pool first. "Get a false grip on the edge, palms flat," says Jackson. "Then rotate your elbow around your wrist as you boost yourself out of the water." It'll be trickier in real life.

12 Nail a dive roll

It's the best way to survive going over the handlebars unscathed. The goal is to keep your head and neck out of harm's way – everything else is secondary. Start small: extend one arm like a wheel, with a small bend in your elbow and your fingers pointing towards you. Aim to roll all the way down that arm, turning your head as you roll over your shoulder and back. Once you've got it at walking pace, try it from a run, then a jump.

13 Chop wood like a lumberjack

Chopping wood doesn't just make you look more manly – doing it for an hour can raise testosterone levels by up to 50%, according to research from the University of California. If you don't live in the woods, hardwire your form with a sledgehammer and tyre: start with one hand near the head of the axe/hammer, and practise letting it slide down the neck as you swing. Aim for a specific spot on the tyre – you need accuracy as well as power.

14 Backflip into water

Jumping in not doing it for you? A backflip should get the crowd on their feet. Stand at the edge of a diving board and jump into the air as if you're going to kick the sky, throwing your arms back at the same time. Tip your head back and try to look at the water underneath you. Once you've rotated back upright, straighten out and hit the water feet first.



15

Climb a rope

Don't climb with your arms – your legs are stronger. Reach up and grab the rope as high as you can. Next, step on the rope with one foot and hook your other foot underneath it. The over/under combination will lock the rope in place. Then raise your feet as high as you can, letting the rope slide between them. Then lock the rope between them again and push your body up, grabbing the rope above you again.

16 Show off with a soccer ball

Endless keepie-uppies are for kids – do an "around the world" instead. Start with the ball on your boot. Let it start to fall to the outside of your foot and, as it does, flick it up and bring your foot up and over the ball, going from inside to out.

17 Juggle effortlessly

Start with two balls in one hand and one in the other. Throw one of the two balls in a gentle arc to your other hand. As the ball starts to fall to the other hand, throw the ball in that hand in a similar gentle arc to the other hand, then catch the first ball. Before the second ball reaches your first hand, throw the last ball in an arc towards your other hand. Repeat the pattern.



18

Sink a free throw

Tim Ferriss, author of *The 4-Hour Chef*, went from stinking at basketball to scoring nine out of ten shots. His tip? "Line up your shot and keep you on the back of the rim. As you shoot, straighten your elbow and push the ball with your fingertips. Keep your arm out to make sure the ball's path is accurate."



19 Fire a bow and arrow

Hold the bow with your arm outstretched. Rest your arrow on the arrow shelf and push the string into the nock of the arrow. To ready the bow to fire, grip the string either side of the arrow with your middle and index finger. Draw it back using your back muscles rather than your arm, then let the string slip from your fingers. Thwock!

20 Serve an ace

Learning to swing your racquet in a circular path is the key to a killer tennis serve. Rather than picturing yourself accelerating the face of the racquet, picture the very tip of it instead. You should feel the racquet pulling you rather than you pushing it towards the ball.

21 Perfect a slam dunk

Skipping will teach you good jumping mechanics: warm up with five minutes before every workout. Next, use depth jumps for explosiveness: stand on a plyo box and lean forward until you fall off – hit the ground and rebound instantly, getting as much air as possible. You'll condition your tendons to generate jump strength. Now you just need gigantic hands.

22 Smash a drive down the fairway

Gripping the club like you're scared it will run away? Stop that. It may sound counter-intuitive but the tighter you hold your club, the less power transfers to the ball and the shorter your tee shots. With the pad of your left hand on top of the club and your right hand covering your left thumb entirely (reversed if you're a lefty), hold it as lightly as possible. You might see it fly off on a few practice swings before you get the hang of it.

23 Spiral-pass like a Wallaby

Anyone can pass a rugby football – but it takes technique and practice to make it zip like a heat-seeking missile straight to a teammate. "A rugby union pass is driven from the shoulders and arms, but it has many difficult components," says rugby coach Tom Eastham. "Keeping the ball tucked in tightly to your body before release is key. Generate power by thrusting your hands forwards using your arms and shoulders while rotating your top hand to keep a tight spin on the ball."

24 Make a pool ball swerve

To swerve a ball, strike down at the ball with the cue. If you want it to curve to the left, strike that side of the ball. But the downwards angle is key – this means it grips the cloth as it spins, creating the curve. And show off by referring to it by its fancy name: a semi-massé.

25 Bowl a strike

Bury your pride and pick up a lighter ball. Heavier balls make the pins fly up in the air but lighter ones generally knock them into each other, which is what you want. If you're right-handed you want to aim at the space between the front pin and the one behind it to the right. Channel the Dude, don't go over the line and let it fly.

26 Hit triple 20 on a regular basis

While it's not a beginners' technique, learning to flick your wrist at the end of a throw will accelerate the dart. This means you'll have to use less motion from your arm to get power, which in turn means your shot will be more accurate.

27 Hit a six

To knock a cricket ball for six, start by pointing your lead elbow towards the bowler, which will help the shot fly straight. Raise your bat up high behind you so you can generate speed. Your downswing should start quite slowly, so the bat is still picking up speed as it strikes the ball. Swing through the ball and straighten your arms for power.

28 Throw a curveball

You may not often take to the pitcher's mound, but a well-thrown curveball is a neat knack for anyone to have: it looks like a fastball but the spin makes it much slower – it's designed to make the batter swing early. Grip the ball between your thumb and middle finger, using your index finger to point at where you want the ball to go. As you throw, rotate your thumb up and your middle finger down as if you were going to click your fingers. The ball will move in the direction of your middle finger.



29 Successfully take a penalty kick

Research at Bath University in the UK confirms that the top left and right corners of the goal are the best targets for a penalty. Shots aimed there have more than an 80% chance of going in. Take a short run-up (four to six steps) and focus on where you want the ball to go in your mind's eye, not your actual eyes – the keeper can see those.

30 Hurl a javelin

The javelin isn't about the power in your arms - it's more about creating a pivot with your body to launch it. Hold the javelin high above your head, gripping behind



31

Nail a sprint start

Just in case you ever find yourself in the blocks, here's how to get ahead of the competition. When in the "set" position you should rise up so your front knee is bent at about 90° and your back knee at 120-135°. Your hips should rise above your head and your head should stay down while accelerating. It should only rise up when you're in full stride.

the binding between your index and middle finger. At the end of your run-up, plant your front foot on the ground and push off with your rear leg, creating a sort of pendulum as you rotate forwards over your lead leg. Release the javelin when you're at your highest point, using your momentum to increase the distance.

32 Swim open water without drowning

Traversing a lake is far more impressive than laps in the pool, but most people struggle with the fear of being out of their depth. "I concentrate on counting each stroke to take my focus away from anything else," says endurance swimmer Adam Walker. "Breaking the distance into 60-stroke chunks makes it seem much less daunting."

33 Escape a riptide

"If you have limited swimming experience or low energy levels, it's best to actually go with the current," says surfing expert Ingemar Cressey. "The rip will take you out to calmer waters where you can reassess your situation. If you're a strong swimmer, swim parallel to the shoreline – this will allow you to escape the current."

34 Paddle beyond the waves on a surfboard

Getting the best waves means paddling beyond the breaks. Rest your body on the board's centre line, with your feet raised slightly off the end. You should be far enough back that the nose of the board is a few centimetres above the water. "Locate the nearest channel [rip] and allow it to assist you by paddling with strong strokes close to the rails of the board," says Cressey. "Remember to keep your head up."

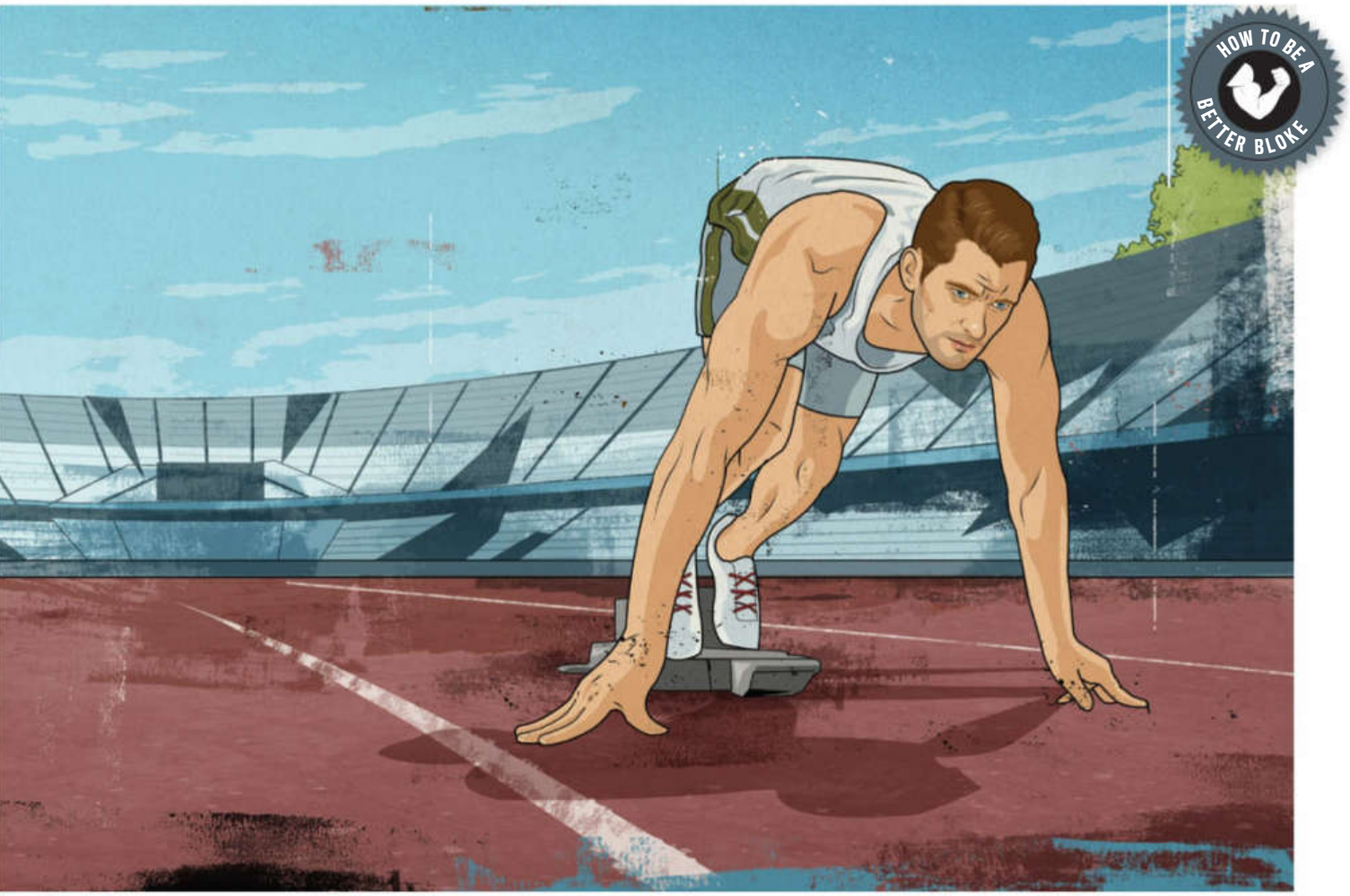


35 Stand up on a surfboard

"Have the nose of the board facing the beach while lying on the board and paddling for a wave," says Cressey. "Once you feel forward motion from the wave, place your hands on the edges of the board in line with your chest. Then drag your feet below you so they land on the board and you are standing with feet hip-width apart, arms stretched out and looking directly forward."

36 Corner a bike at top speed

"Keep your head up and look forward into the turn," says cycling expert James Spender. "Brake before the corner, not during it because that can cause you to skid. Enter the corner wide, then carve an arc through the apex and exit staying wide. Lean into the corner, keeping your inside knee up and your outside foot low, with most weight on your outside pedal for stability."



37

Trackstand like it's nothing

Standing still on your bike at the lights isn't magic – just good balance. Stand with your feet flat on the pedals and turn your handles 45°, with your weight over the bars. Keep your legs straight but not locked and stick your hips out to the opposite side to your handlebars. Apply a little pressure to the pedal with your front foot. When practising, do it with your wheel against something.



38 Pedal over cobbles without fear

"Stay as loose and relaxed as possible to help absorb bumps and maintain a straight line," says Spender. "Place your hands on the centre-top of the bars, either side of the stem, with an overhand grip – that'll stave off arm fatigue. Likewise, pedalling in a slightly harder gear with lower cadence [the RPM of your legs] can help put more emphasis on the shock-absorbing qualities of your legs rather than your backside."

39 Cycle descents like a madman

"Stay relaxed with your body low and elbows tucked in for aerodynamic benefit, keeping your feet level and hands on the drops," says Spender. "Try to raise your backside slightly off the saddle to help absorb road vibrations and allow quick weight shifts to aid cornering and stability. Look as far down the road as possible to aid anticipation of obstacles and corners."

40 Make track cycling second nature

Tracks usually require that you do an introductory course with the velodrome officials, which lets you come to terms with the speed and scale of the track – and the bike. "Track bikes are 'fixed wheel', meaning you can't coast, so don't forget that you always have to keep pedalling," says Spender. "Practise riding on the banks by getting progressively higher and higher on each lap. Tracks are ridden anticlockwise so always check over your right shoulder before moving up the track to avoid collisions."

41 Join a peloton

"Confidence is key so practise riding with a few friends before burying yourself in a pack of 50 riders," says Spender. "There'll be other riders very close to you so pay constant attention to what's going on around you. Getting as close as possible to the rider in front helps you save energy as you slipstream, but avoid overlapping your front wheel with their rear one – and be aware that etiquette dictates you should take your turn at the front when called upon, so other riders can benefit from your slipstream."

42 Tackle steep drops on a mountain bike

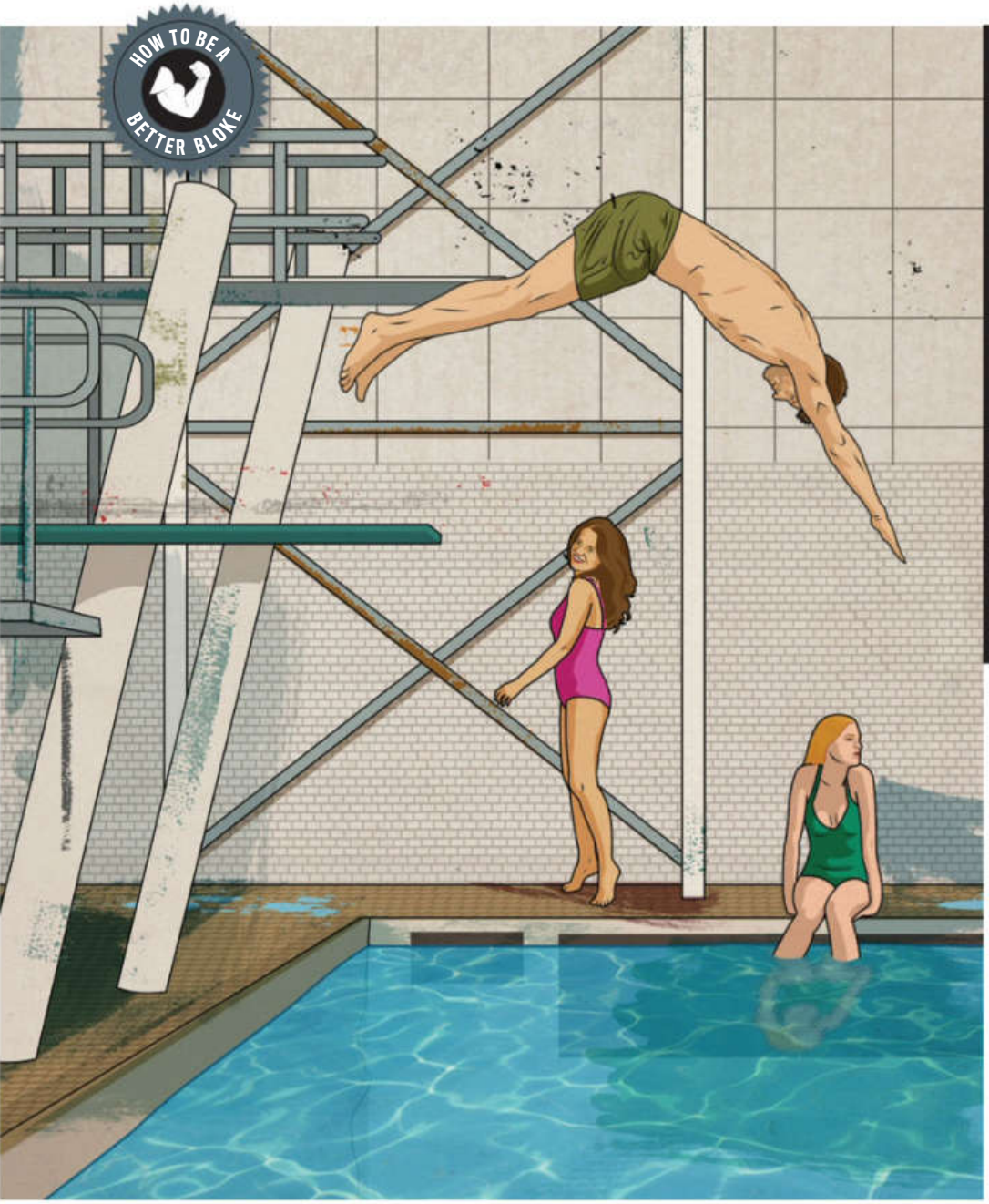
"Spot your landing and judge your speed – a recce beforehand on foot is often a good idea," says Spender. "As you ride the drop, 'unweight' the front wheel by leaning back and pulling on the bars just before the lip of the drop. Keep your elbows and knees slightly bent with a firm grip on the bars and the pedals horizontal to absorb the impact of the drop. Aim to land your front wheel slightly before your rear."

43 Ride clipped in

When you're clipped to the pedals your cycling is more efficient – because you can propel yourself with both pedals at once – and also more powerful. "To clip in, locate the front of the cleat [attached to the underside of your shoe] first, before stamping down with your heel to engage the spring locking mechanism," says Spender. "To clip out, twist your heel outwards. Anticipate the road ahead and leave yourself plenty of time to unclip before coming to a stop. For those cyclists new to clipless pedals, practise riding on grass first."

44 Fall safely

If you're going to come a cropper, you you may as well come a cropper safely. "Start with the back breakfall," says judo black belt Vasil Panfil. "To fall on your back, relax and tuck your chin." Distribute the force evenly by slapping your arms on the floor in a U-shape – don't reach back.



45

Dive from a board

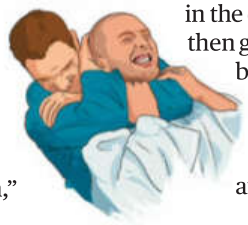
Get a feel for the board's spring by bending your knees – don't jump up and down. To begin the dive, hold your hands overhead with your arms against your ears, fingers overlapping and thumbs locked together. Jump from the board as it bounces upwards. Bend at the hips so you go towards the water headfirst. Keep your body as straight as possible when you hit the water.

46 Punch like a champ

Start with the right cross – it's the perfect combination of speed and power. "Stand with your left foot forward and your hands up by your head," says MMA fighter and coach Ash Grimshaw. "As you throw your fist out in front of you, push off with your rear leg – imagine you're crushing a cigarette under the ball of your foot. Try to punch through your target, rather than hitting the surface." And remember: thumb outside your fist.

47 Throw a low kick

No, not to the groin. The low kick in Muay Thai kickboxing is designed to deaden the thigh of your opponent so they can't punch as hard or move as easily. "Standing in the same stance you threw your punch from, step your lead foot out at a 90° angle then swing your rear leg round, ensuring your shin connects with their thigh," says Grimshaw. "Again, try to kick through their leg."



48 Apply a rear naked choke...

It's the most common fight-ender in MMA for a reason. "Stand behind someone and wrap your left arm around their neck so their throat is in the crook of your elbow, then grab your right arm's biceps," says Grimshaw. "Put your right hand on the back of your opponent's head and squeeze. You'll cut the blood flow through the carotid arteries and send them to sleep." Be extremely careful – holding for too long could kill someone.

49 ...or get out of one

If you've had a choke applied to you it's possible, but not easy, to escape. Tuck your chin into the crook of the elbow to alleviate the pressure. Then use both hands to press the elbow into your chin – don't try to lift it off your neck. Let your weight sag so the other person supports you. Then swing your body and turn into the choking arm, maintaining that pressure. Your attacker's hold should loosen.

50 Tackle an opponent to the ground

"A double-leg takedown is one of the most effective methods for getting someone to the ground," says Grimshaw. Think of it like an upgraded rugby tackle. Step close enough to touch your opponent's shoulder, put your front foot between their legs, then drop to that knee and wrap your arms around their legs. Step around their body with your back leg and drive them sideways to the ground. ■

TAKE FIVE

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IS THIS THE FUTURE OF FOOD?

The market for meal-replacement drinks is growing. New fitness-focused powdered drink products are available that can – theoretically – replace food entirely. Are they a real alternative? *MF* finds out.

"What if you never had to worry about food again?" asks the website for Soylent, a powdered meal-replacement drink that claims to provide "all the essential nutrients required to fuel the human body" while also saving you time and money. Launched as a start-up by Silicon Valley software engineer Rob Rhinehart in 2013, Soylent has proven to be a wildly successful concept, attracting $20 million in investment earlier this year to cope with huge demand.

It's also inspired rival companies such as Joylent (a European take, mixed according to Soylent's open-source recipe), Melbourne-based Aussielent and the UK-derived Huel. But can one gloopy processed drink really provide all of the macro- and micronutrients your body needs?

All in one

"Our aim was to create a complete food in a powdered format," says Julian Hearn, who founded Huel (*huel.me*) with the help of nutritionist James Collier. He claims Huel provides at least 100% of a person's nutritional needs. "We're using powdered peas, rice, flaxseeds, coconut and more," Heran adds. It's a natural product, free from added sugar, meat, animal products, dairy or eggs. Unlike some of our rivals, we use low-GI oats as our main carbohydrate source rather than synthetic maltodextrin, and we've got a much higher protein content at 75g per 1,000 calories, which comes from two different protein sources to ensure you get a complete amino acid profile."



Cutlery-free zone. *It may provide all of the macronutrients the body needs in a meal, but could you consume it every day of the week?*

Not all nutritionists are convinced, however. "These types of products may use natural ingredients, but they've still been heavily processed," says sports nutritionist Laurent Bannock. "What's more, we've only identified a small number of substances in food that are needed for health, such as vitamins and minerals – there's still so much we don't know. You can't naïvely claim that you're providing everything the body needs in one drink. It will be missing a host of things that we don't even understand yet."

Hearn disagrees: "We've actually added extra ingredients that aren't identified as essential (yet) because we believe they're nutritionally beneficial, such as phytonutrients and choline."

Gut feeling

Another potential issue is the complex nature of our digestive systems. "The sight and smell of food kicks off a cascade of reactions across your body, beginning a series of hormonal changes that allow you to better absorb nutrients," says Dr Allen Lim, the groundbreaking nutrition scientist behind Skratch Labs (*skratchlabs.com*). "Likewise the process of chewing releases digestive enzymes in your stomach that aid digestion. Once food reaches your stomach, it's broken down into liquid form by stomach acid so it can pass into your intestines, but this process takes time. If you're ingesting everything via liquids there's a risk you'll create an overflow in your small intestine, which limits its ability to absorb nutrients."

While Hearn argues that Huel has a "pleasant oaty smell" that may stimulate some of the same responses, the full impact of a liquid-only diet on our digestive system is hard to measure. "The only way to determine whether these products are legitimately healthy is to do a randomised control study with at least a few hundred participants over a minimum of two years," says Bannock. "Until that happens, there's no way of knowing for sure, regardless of what these companies say in their marketing material."



"A meal replacement drink could be a viable short-term option to keep things kicking over."

Dinner in a glass? *Maybe, but it's not designed to replace food entirely.*





"The impact of a liquid-only diet on our bodies is hard to measure."

Fast food

Another key difference between Huel and Soylent – and one that's apparent in Soylent's inherently negative suggestion that food is something to be "worried about" – is the notion that it could or should replace food entirely in your diet. "Preparing and eating meals together is a hugely important aspect of human existence," says Hearn. "We're not suggesting that Huel should ever replace a family meal or dinner with friends. We see it as an option for situations where you don't have time to prepare, or don't have access to, healthy food. If the other option is eating junk food, Huel is a much better choice."

Bannock agrees – almost. "No matter how time-poor you might be, you can always carry healthy portable snacks such as fruit, nuts and biltong, while batch-cooking and storing vegetables and meats will provide you with healthy food for days, especially if you freeze it. I suppose if you're in a situation where that just isn't an option – say you're at an airport or travelling long distances by coach – it could be a viable short-term option to help keep things ticking over."

The future of food? Probably not. But a useful tool to help keep your healthy eating on track in desperate situations? Absolutely. ■



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A fair shake

We decided to live on meal shakes for 48 hours. *MF*'s Matt Huckle was the man for the job.

DAY 1

10am Breakfast

■ Arrive at my desk, make the first shake of the day (three scoops, half a litre of water) and down it. It smells like Play-Doh but the taste isn't unpleasant.

12pm

■ Starting to feel slightly faint.

1pm Lunch

■ Definitely flagging. Another shake helps.

4pm Mid-afternoon shake

Normally this would be biscuit time. Instead, it's more shake. It's dispiriting, frankly.

7.30pm Dinner

■ After my fourth shake I go for a 3km run with some mini-sprints. Surviving on shakes since this morning hasn't had a noticeable effect on my performance. I end the day craving real food, though.

DAY 2

10am Breakfast

■ The first shake of the day goes down surprisingly easily.

12pm

■ It seems I've avoided yesterday's weak feeling. I had a bit more than three scoops in my morning shake, and sipped it a bit more slowly, so perhaps that helped – or perhaps I'm just getting used to it.

1pm Lunch

■ I'd forgotten about the shakes and made a plan to go out to eat. Now I remember. Now I feel grumpy.

4pm Mid-afternoon shake

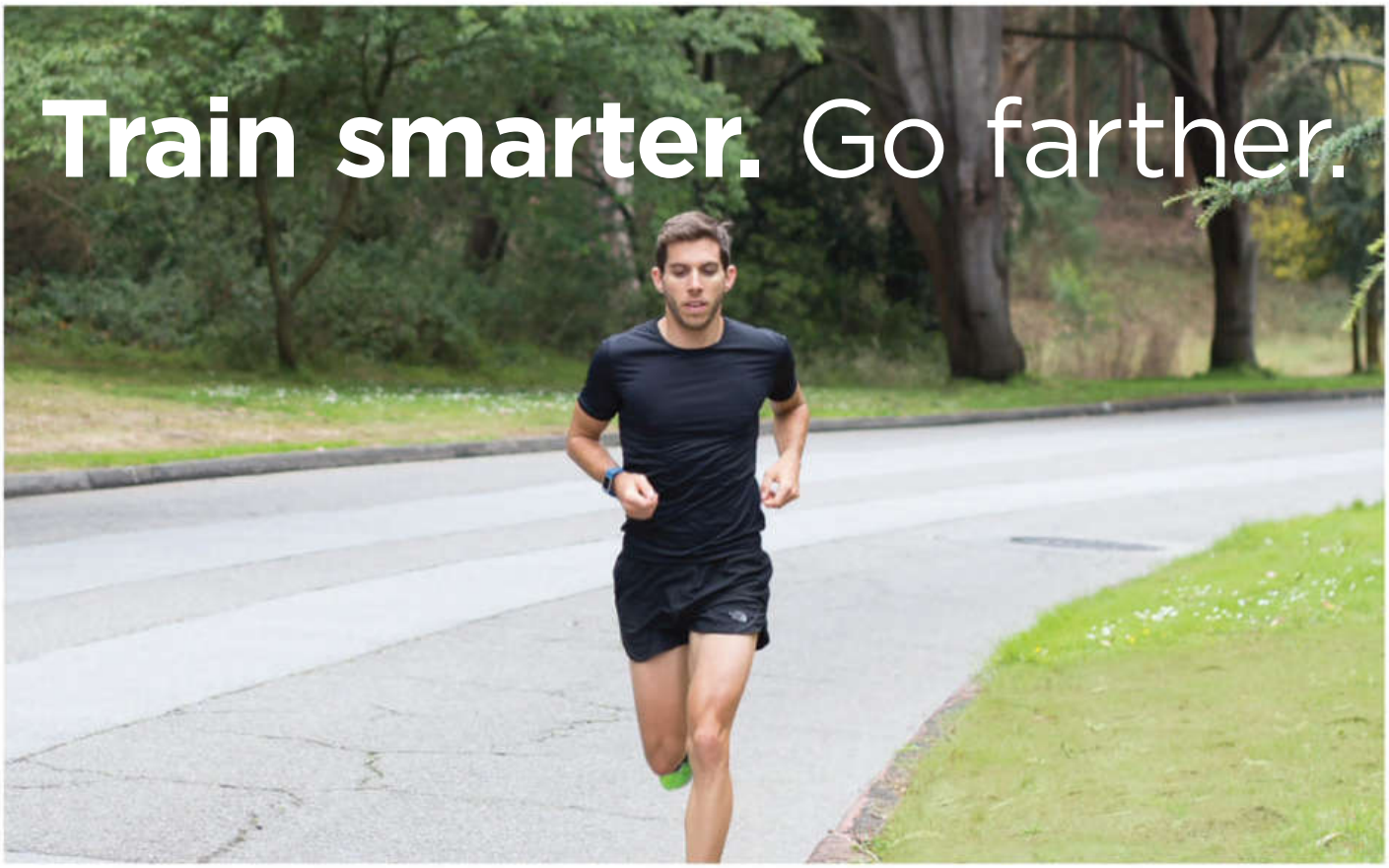
■ I lethargically measure out and drink another shake, giving my donut-munching colleagues the stink-eye.

7.30pm Dinner

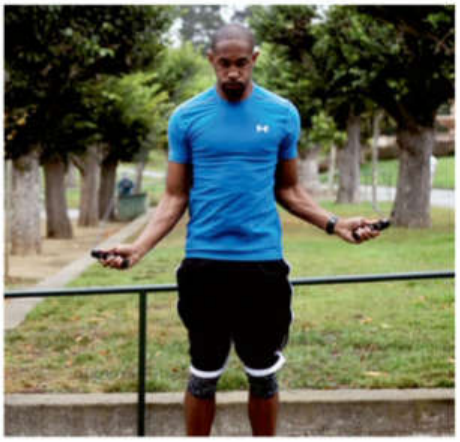
After eight shakes in two days, my energy levels have stayed consistent and I feel fine – but, as I realise when I walk past a Hungry Jack's, I've missed eating. While the shakes seem to do the job, I wouldn't recommend living on them.

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King

Friday Night Lights and *Lone Survivor* director Peter Berg, producer of the new series *Ballers* (currently showing on Foxtel), wants to teach you how to be a man – one action movie, TV project, expletive-laced object lesson and gut punch at a time.

of the Hollywood jungle

By Eric Benson
Photographs by Joe Pugliese



Peter Berg is stalking across a boxing ring – gloves up, head bobbing, sinews twitching – looking for an opening so he can unleash a flurry of punches into the torso of his opponent, a recently retired Navy SEAL. Dressed in Johnny Cash black, the 51-year-old director of the films *Friday Night Lights* and *Lone Survivor,* drives the SEAL onto the ropes, where he lands a strong jab-cross combo, then vaults out of reach when his opponent strikes back. The SEAL pursues Berg into the middle of the ring, and the two men trade a series of loud, thwacking blows before embracing in a clinch. The bell rings and Berg flops down in his corner, drenched in sweat. He waves me over with his glove.

"Good way to wake up," he growls through his mouthguard.

It's 9am on a Tuesday at Wild Card West Boxing Club, the gym that Berg co-owns in Santa Monica, California, and the director appears eerily calm, even serene, for someone engaged in hand-to-hand combat. But Peter Berg, one of the most powerful men in Hollywood, is in his Zen place. "For me, this is kind of like yoga," he tells me later.

Well, yoga with a fury. Colby Parker Jr, Berg's longtime film editor, says that one of Berg's most fundamental beliefs is that every time "one man meets another man, the first thing that goes through his mind, whether or not he knows it, is: 'Can I take him in a fight?'" Taylor Kitsch, a frequent star in Berg's films and a sometime sparring partner, says boxing with the director often means finding yourself in "a street fight… he can get very offensive – put it that way." Or, in the words of Dwayne Johnson, another inveterate Berg collaborator: "In the ring and in training, Pete's an absolute fucking animal."

Even when he's not wearing boxing gloves, Berg can't help but throw punches. During the making of 2007's *The Kingdom,* Berg playfully socked his leading lady, Jennifer Garner, in the stomach, mistakenly believing she was wearing a protective flak jacket. (She wasn't, but was unhurt.) During a break from filming 2013's *Lone Survivor,* about Navy SEALs in Afghanistan, Berg got into a friendly midair brawl with his leading man, Mark Wahlberg, causing thousands of dollars of damage to the interior of the actor's private jet. "He punched me in the throat once and I couldn't talk for a week – that really made him happy," Parker remembers. "He was excited to know that he might have crushed my larynx. He gets this weird Cheshire cat smile if he draws blood from you."

Berg doesn't allow junk food on set, and he slaps cigarettes out of the hands of crew members. "If he sees someone eating potato chips, he says, 'That's the short game, buddy.'"

Just a few years ago, such behaviour might have got Berg mistaken for another brash Hollywood ego run amok. After all, this was the guy who followed up a tepidly received Will Smith superhero movie, *Hancock,* with 2012's *Battleship,* a $220 million boardgame-adaptation flop. But since *Battleship,* Berg has shunned comic book and Hasbro projects and pursued what he's described as a personal mission: making films and TV shows that depict the struggles of extremely capable, very physical, (usually) real-life men.

Following the success of *Lone Survivor*, he's now in the process of developing movies about wrongfully imprisoned American boxer Dewey Bozella and Mexico's jailed Sinaloa cartel drug lord "El Chapo" Guzmán. He's currently directing *Deepwater Horizon,* a big-budget film chronicling the chaos of the 2010 BP oil spill, from the perspective of the roughnecks who worked on the rig.

"He really has this unique, interesting mix of strong human empathy and machismo," says Lorenzo di Bonaventura, the producer of the *Transformers* movies, who hired Berg to direct *Deepwater Horizon*. "Our movie is about honouring both the people who died and those who survived that day, so humanity is incredibly important; at the same time, the rig blowout itself was intense, it was heroic, it was literally a trial by fire. There are a lot of people who can shoot frenetic or dynamic action, but there's only a handful of directors capable of keeping you in the shoes of the characters while this traumatic thing is going on. If I need humanity, Pete's got it. If I need toughness, Pete's got it."

Styling by Ashley Weston/The Wall Group; Grooming by Sonia Lee/Exclusive Artists Mgmt. using Murad



"I once spent my birthday in Iraq with Navy SEALs near Syria," Berg says. "And my goal recently was to be Prisoner No. 7853227 at Sing Sing prison for a month."

This month marks the premiere of another high-profile Berg project: HBO's *Ballers,* an *Entourage*-like dramedy about current and former NFL players in Miami and their harried retired-jock money manager, played by Dwayne Johnson. (Berg serves as executive producer, directed the pilot, and even makes an appearance as a coach). The show, he says, "looks at drugs and domestic violence and whatever disaster of the day hits the NFL, but it's also meant to be a fun experience".

At the same time, Berg has stepped far beyond the director's chair and into the spotlight himself as an outspoken critic on a range of issues, from sports to the male lifestyle. In 2013, he debuted his own HBO Sports documentary series, *State of Play,* where he leads roundtable discussions on issues such as football head injuries, responsible Little League parenting and pro-athlete domestic violence. He wrote about his decision to pull his son from tackle football for *Time*. And he routinely makes appearances on sports talk-radio shows, in school auditoriums and on ideas-festival panels, where he promotes his own ideas of proper manhood. His "Bergisms" can be practical, such as advising someone to routinely wake up before dawn, but they tend to take on a cryptic and quasi-spiritual quality, too. "Smooth is fast in all aspects of life," Berg once told listeners on Colby Parker Jr.'s podcast, *The Flavor Bin*. "Whether it's combat, romance, academics or finance – be smooth, be fast."

Take them or leave them, but these are the words Peter Berg lives by, and today at Wild Card West, I watch as he applies his teachings to combat: he quickly chases his sparring partners with a scowl, pushes them to the point of exhaustion, then hugs it out afterward. He tells me he's designed his gym to attract his kind of people and foster his brand of everyone-is-equal-in-the-ring values. Police, firemen, EMTs, and active and retired military train for free. Professional fighters – Saúl "Canelo" Álvarez, Peter Quillin, Julio César Chávez Jr and Ray Beltrán – take over Wild Card West some afternoons. On the weekends, Berg opens up the gym to LA youth, and attracts "some pretty tough kids from the rougher areas of the city and some really wealthy West Side kids whose parents drop them off and say, 'I want someone to punch my kid in the face.'" Movie types do drop by, but there's no industry talk – Berg has banned it.

"I'm not going to help anyone's career," he says. "No-one is looking for anything, it's just a bunch of guys who love boxing. I'd much rather do this than go into Hollywood."

A few minutes after Berg wraps up his sparring workout with 21 vigorously executed pullups, the director and I are sitting upstairs in Wild Card West's version of a man cave. Resting on a shelf are a framed poster for the James Earl Jones boxing film *The Great White Hope,* a painting of a child soldier wielding a Kalashnikov, and a portrait of a dark-haired nude. Behind me, on the opposite wall, hangs a giant painting of a handgun. (Only after our interview do I realise that Berg had been staring at it for nearly two hours.)

Berg grew up in the fashionable New York City suburb of Chappaqua, the son of an ex-Marine ad man. Early on, he was a self-described spaz, channelling his massive energy reserves towards sport and fighting, and often making everyone around him anxious and miserable. He started boxing at summer camp. "It was kind of a sadistic place," Berg says. "The counselors would take us into the woods, make a boxing ring with rope around the trees, pick kids to fight then bet on us." You found out quickly what you were really made of, and there was no hiding. Berg loved it. "I guess I was always drawn to people of action, people who did something," he says. "I was always looking at the guys who were kind of running at [conflict]. I always thought there was a lot of fun in that culture."

When Berg arrived in Los Angeles in 1985, he was determined to make it as an actor. By the early 1990s, he had a formidable career. He'd co-starred in the ski-bum-classic *Aspen Extreme,* played a con's easy mark in the neo-noir *The Last Seduction* and got picked for the role of the eponymous melanin-deprived boxer in the comedy *The Great White Hype*. Most





Berg, then a director of the 2013 film *Lone Survivor*, with star Mark Wahlberg in New Mexico; and the director pumps up the crowd of extras while filming the TV version of *Friday Night Lights*.

Clockwise from Left: 20thCentFox/Everett Collection; Universal Pictures/Everett Collection; NBC/Getty Images

famously, he starred as hockey-playing Dr Billy Kronk on *Chicago Hope,* where he went mano-a-mano with George Clooney's *ER* doc in the hospital-drama ratings war.

But he also found himself slipping into what he called the "anti-working-man code." He and his actor mates would take pride in sleeping late, going to movies in the middle of the day, and tearing up the LA scene at night. "There wasn't a club in Hollywood where I wasn't the last one out," Berg says. He was succeeding in his career, but he was restless. He was spending too many hours "just fucking sitting around being bored out of my mind".

On the set of *Cop Land* – a New York-area crime drama starring Sylvester Stallone, Robert De Niro and Harvey Keitel – Berg, then 32, decided he needed to make a change. "I was watching the director, James Mangold, and here's this kid my age arguing with Stallone and Harvey Weinstein, and I asked him, 'Dude, how did you get this?'"

Mangold told Berg he needed to write a script. So Berg buckled down, returning to his small room at New York's Essex House hotel every night and writing out scenes on note cards until they filled up the walls. Two years later, the note cards became *Very Bad Things,* a black comedy about a Las Vegas bachelor party that spirals terribly out of control.

"Look, I used to go to Vegas and party a lot," he says. "And I can remember being there with some friends, and everywhere I looked there were these groups of white preppy guys in khaki pants and button-down shirts and they'd just have this crazy look in their eyes. I remember thinking, 'These guys are looking for something – what happens if they find it?'"

As Berg's career grew, so did the lengths he'd go to prepare for his films. For 2003's action-comedy, *The Rundown,* starring Johnson, Berg and a small production crew went to Brazil to scout Amazonian locations, and were briefly detained by a group of gunmen. ("We were taken by three gentlemen at gunpoint and moved to the edge of a cliff and spent what felt like a very long period of time getting all our stuff taken," he says.) For 2004's Texas football epic *Friday Night Lights,* Berg spent a season with the varsity squad of Westlake High School in the suburbs of Austin, an experiment that informed the much-loved *Friday Night Lights* TV show he created in 2006. ("After that, people would ask me if I could bring a *Friday Night Lights* approach to a project," he says, "something that was visceral and deeply emotional.") For 2007's war-on-terror thriller *The Kingdom,* Berg visited Saudi Arabia and shadowed the local police force, then spent time with FBI agents in the bureau's international crime division. Even *Battleship* merited immersive research: the director spent 10 days aboard the USS *Spruance.*

Baller Brothers

Dwayne Johnson, star of *Ballers,* sounds off on Peter Berg, executive producer.

You worked with Pete more than a decade ago, and now you've teamed up with him again on *Ballers*. Has he changed?
Pete's grown tremendously as a director and as a man over a decade of failures, successes, laughing, crying and all that shit in between. Those ups and downs have made him the phenomenal director he is today.

Was there any distinct Pete Berg magic that he brought to *Ballers?*
He's a unique dude who swings for the fences every time he steps up to bat. The Berg magic he brought to *Ballers* was authenticity, tone, storytelling, character quality and a well-placed joke about balls. He's got a wicked sense of humour that's as dark as mine, which is why we are brothers.

Have you ever sparred with him in the boxing ring?
Our sparring lasts about 33 seconds. He lights me up with his vicious right hook, and I respond by grabbing him and suplexing him through the mat.

What's the best piece of advice Berg ever gave you?
"Remember, the best piece of ass you'll ever get is when your finger slips through the toilet paper." I love you too, Pete. –E.B.

But it was Berg's last movie, *Lone Survivor,* where the lines between his filmmaking and his life converged. For research, Berg embedded for a month with a SEAL unit in Iraq, accompanying them on raids. ("Did you ever see anyone killed?" he asked a *New York Times Magazine* writer in 2013. "I did.") When he got back home, he spent a year getting to know the SEAL community, "going out and drinking with them, meeting their wives," – and sometimes going to their funerals. By the time the production rolled around, Berg felt he'd done the homework required to tell the tale of Navy SEAL Marcus Luttrell and the 19 servicemen who died on a mission in Afghanistan. Now Berg frequently invites SEALs and their families to his house in Montana. "I have friends who are in Yemen fighting right now as we sit here," Berg says, "and some of them are going to die."

Berg's wildest adventures may still be ahead of him. To prepare for *Deepwater Horizon,* he's been spending "99% of my time with the survivors of the rig and members of the deepwater drilling community, trying to learn as much as I can about how that culture works." For his Bozella biopic, Berg asked the New York State Department of Corrections to let him enter the general population at Sing Sing prison for a few weeks so he could better understand the wrongly incarcerated boxer's plight, but he was denied. (In the end, Berg struck a compromise and spent several weeks shadowing the prison's guards instead.)

"To me, it's one of the great joys and perks of filmmaking," Berg says. "You get to move into these different cultures like an anthropologist. I've always been the guy who'd rather spend Christmas living with high school football players in Texas than at some beach hotel in Hawaii. I once spent my birthday in Iraq with Navy SEALs in the desert near Syria, and my goal recently was to be Prisoner No. 7853227 at Sing Sing prison for a month."

He pauses for just a moment, then asks: "What, does that sound crazy?"

Berg isn't the first ultramacho Hollywood auteur, of course. But unlike John Ford, he doesn't clock his actors when they disagree with him (Berg's punches are only playful); unlike John Huston – who directed *The African Queen* so he could bag elephants on his days off – Berg doesn't hunt; and unlike John Milius – famous for writing *Dirty Harry* and *Apocalypse Now* – Berg isn't politically conservative. (He's called President Obama the "warrior-in-chief" and, in 2012, asked the Romney campaign to stop using the catchphrase "Clear Eyes. Full Hearts. Can't Lose." from the TV show *Friday Night Lights.*)



Berg stars in the 1996 boxing satire *The Great White Hype*, in which he plays Terry Conklin, an amateur pugilist coaxed out of retirement for one last fight.

Still, like his tough-guy forbears, Berg approaches filmmaking as the creative equivalent of a prizefight.

"I'm not a director who likes to sit around and small-talk," Berg tells me. "When I get there, it's on. I have an action component to a lot of my films. They're dangerous. I've had people killed on my sets." (Berg witnessed a prop assistant on *The Kingdom* fatally crash his ATV, and now gets irate when he perceives lapses in safety.) Berg doesn't allow junk food on his shoots, and has been known to slap cigarettes out of the hands of crew members. "If he sees someone eating potato chips, he says, 'That's the short game, buddy,'" Parker tells me. Pushup contests, trips to boxing gyms and early-morning workouts are commonplace on a Berg set.

This may make Berg sound like a hard-arse disciplinarian, but, in truth, he's closer to a positive-thinking, healthy-living guru. He tells me he's all about "self empowerment", a claim Parker confirms: "He's actually a very generous and caring person. He'd pay people to work out. He just loves seeing people get in shape and better themselves, and he's incredible at rallying them. He'll be on set slapping the grip on the ass and screaming, 'This is the shot, let's go!'"

Berg's penchant for motivation extends well beyond the film set. There's rarely a situation in which he's not ready to dispense a kernel – or five – of sage advice.

When interns at Berg's principal production company, Film 44, tell him they want to start making movies, he advises them to first "go to Europe and fall in love and get your heart broken, or go get arrested in Thailand and get in some real trouble – go live a life."

When someone criticises Berg for making films that are "too violent", he tells them they need to buck up and confront reality. "It's like people who want to eat a hamburger but are absolutely disgusted by the idea of going to a slaughter yard. If you're going to eat a fucking cow, you have a responsibility to understand where that cow came from." When I ask Berg his secret to productivity – after all, he's juggling a seemingly endless number of projects – he sounds like a Silicon Valley life hacker. "Wake up two hours earlier than you do right now, and see what happens," he says. On the subject of child athletes, he tells overbearing parents to take it easy. "Sports are meant to be fun – first and foremost," he says. "Sports are not meant to be a ticket into a Division 1 school, sports are not meant to be an exclusive experience that only elite athletes can have."

"Do 200 pushups, 35 pullups, 150 situps, hit the heavy bag, spar a few rounds, then get some sleep and you'll be in plenty good shape."

On the subject of relationships, Berg, who's divorced with a teenage son, tells younger men like Parker and Kitsch to "be prepared to lose a lot of battles and just try not to lose the war. Individual battles are generally irrelevant. I tell them to let the little things go."

And as for fitness, Berg touts an old-school approach. "I'll tell you what: do 200 pushups, 35 pullups, 150 situps, spar a few rounds, hit the heavy bag, then get some sleep and you'll be in plenty good shape," Berg says. "Boxers have been doing these exercises for 150 years. If you want fitness, go box. If you want to be a freak, go to the gym and do deep power squats."

As Berg slurps down a "Navy SEAL-approved" Randy's Powerhouse protein shake in the man cave at Wild Card West, he tells me there's a unifying theory to his Bergisms. Over the years, he's been conducting an informal study of high-functioning, successful men – whether it's warriors like Marcus Luttrell or his college friend, agent Ari Emanuel – and he's come to understand they share the same motivations.

"I'm a believer in flow theory," Berg says. "This crazy psychologist [Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi] wrote this wonderful book, [*Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*], which talks about our ultimate human experiences, when we're really, really happy. Flow is the feeling you get when you really push yourself into an uncomfortable place, and then something clicks and time stands still. For Marcus Luttrell and the SEALs, flow is when it's three in the morning and you're with 12 of your guys, flying 200 feet over the ground in a helicopter about ready to go assault a village full of legitimate Taliban fighters. For Ari Emanuel, it's putting together these wild deals to buy and sell companies. What most people don't realise about men like Marcus Luttrell and Ari Emanuel is that it's not about the money, it's not about the ego, it's not about the glory – it's about the thrill of the moment. If it's the object you're chasing, it doesn't interest me as much as if it's the hunt."

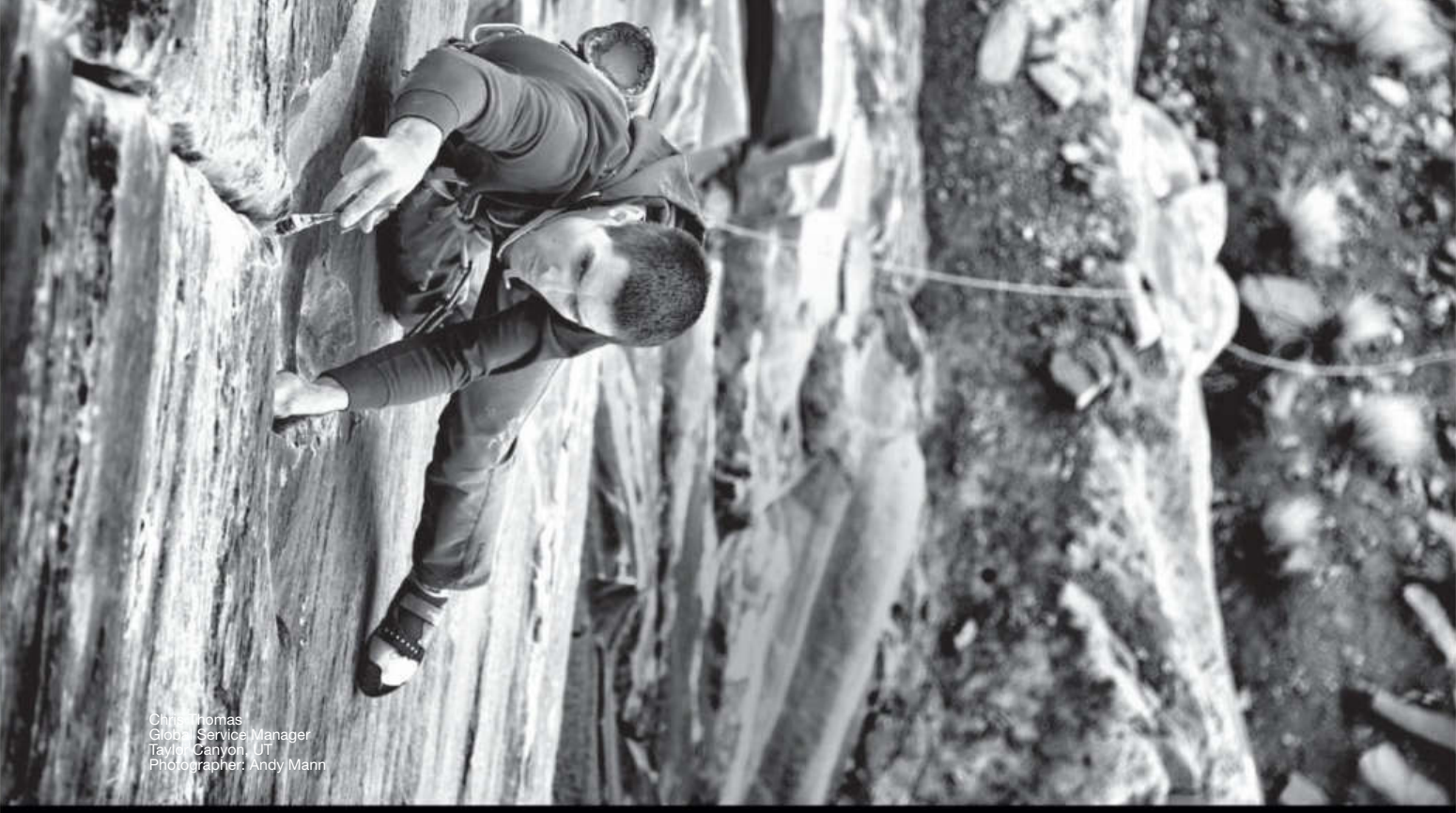
Berg and I have been sitting upstairs at Wild Card West for a few hours, and I ask him what he – the successful, satisfied, well-adjusted 51-year-old director – would say to someone like his rambunctious and restless 29-year-old self. After all these years and career transformations, what was the key to his success?

"It comes down to effort," Berg says, with a drill sergeant's intensity. "Figure out something you like doing, and you have to work – you just have to. And if you can't figure it out, you have to *go* figure it out. Laziness will destroy you. Apathy will destroy you."

"But what if I'm someone who just likes sleeping in and hanging out with my friends?" I ask, doing my best to goad him.

"Then you're going to end up frustrated, bored and probably on a bad path," he says. Berg smells blood. A big Cheshire cat smile comes over his face.

"Wake the fuck up, make some sacrifices and don't be a fucking pussy." ■



Chris Thomas
Global Service Manager
Taylor Canyon, UT
Photographer: Andy Mann













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Edited by Sean Hyson

The Body Book



Let it grip!

A strong hold is the secret to a healthy heart.

Nothing conveys strength and commands respect like a firm handshake – but it signifies more than just confidence, according to a new study published in *The Lancet*. The same grip strength that allows you to exude such power is also indicative of a healthy heart.

The study, which assessed the grip strength of 139,000 people over four years, found it directly correlated with risk of cardiovascular mortality. Simply put, the stronger your grip, the healthier your heart. Grip strength was used as an indication of overall strength – and quite rightly. It's typically your weakest link and the first thing to fail before your larger muscle groups when doing lifts such as deadlifts and pullups.

So how can you boost your grip and strengthen your heart? Ditch the straps. A 2011 study in the *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research* advised against using straps or other aids if you want to build better grip strength – which should lead to bigger gains, more strength and a healthier ticker. Instead, add towel pullups to failure at the end of your workout to boost your hand strength.

Words Glen Durrant Illustration Kineticmesh



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SUMMER SIX-PACK PROGRAM

The warmer months are almost upon us, and you'll want to look ripped at the beach, right? We've come up with the perfect summer workout plan: one that never lets your body find out what it is. By Ryan Munsey

When you're talking about cars or job applicants, efficiency is a good thing. When you're talking about working out so you can see your abs, it's a bad one. The problem is, the more efficient your body becomes performing any exercise, the fewer calories it burns doing it. So with this program, our goal is to make your body more inefficient so that it burns more calories and stimulates muscle. While it's not the most "efficient" training, it is the fastest route to abs. Go figure.

HOW IT WORKS

The best way to throw the body off and fight efficiency is to keep changing up your workouts to prevent adaptation. You'll need to train three days a week for four weeks with the following routines: a high-rep workout to build your work capacity and burn loads of calories; a barbell-based strength day to maximally stimulate muscle; and a blend of strongman and circuit training to challenge muscles you haven't worked before along with your heart. This three-pronged attack will confuse your metabolism and trick your body into burning more fat (accompanied by a sound diet), and you should see results within a month. It's inefficiency at its most effective.

Directions

Perform each workout once per week, resting a day between sessions. Exercises marked "A" and "B" are alternated – perform one set of A, rest as needed, then B, and rest again. Repeat until all sets are done for the pair. The remaining exercises are done as straight sets.

On Day III, perform the exercises as a big circuit. Do one set of each exercise without rest in between. Then rest as needed and repeat the circuit until 30 minutes have elapsed. During Days I and III, strive to complete the whole session in less time each week or lift more total weight. On Day II, choose a weight for each exercise with which you can perform six to seven reps. The sets and reps that appear here are for the program's first week.

Day I

1 PULLUP

Sets: As many as needed
Reps: 50 total

Hang from a pullup bar with your hands outside shoulder width and palms facing away from you. Pull yourself up until your chin is over the bar. Do 50 total reps as quickly as possible, resting as needed.

A HALF KILO OF MUSCLE BURNS THREE TIMES THE CALORIES OF A HALF KILO OF FAT.



2A WALKING LUNGE

Sets: 10 Reps: 10 to 1

Hold a pair of dumbbells and step forward with one leg. Lower your body until your front thigh is parallel to the floor and your rear knee nearly touches the floor. Step forward and repeat on the other leg. Continue lunging forward. Perform 10 reps your first set, then nine your second and so on down to one rep.

2B DIP

Sets: 10 Reps: 1 to 10

Suspend yourself over parallel bars and lower your body until your upper arms are parallel to the floor. Press yourself back up. Perform one rep the first set, two reps the second, and continue adding reps up to 10.



3 ALLIGATOR WALK

Sets: 4 Reps: Walk as far as you can

Get into a pushup position with your hands at shoulder width. Your body should form a straight line. Keeping your core tight, take small steps with your hands and feet so you move across the floor like an alligator. Go until you feel your shoulders are about to give out.

James Michelfelder / Styling by Barret Wertz; Grooming by Natasha Leibel/ABTP.com using Shu Uemura

Day II



1A FRONT SQUAT

Sets: 4 Reps: 5

Cross your arms and grasp the bar. Raise your elbows until your upper arms are parallel to the floor. Take the bar out of the rack and let it rest on the front of your shoulders. Set your feet at shoulder width and squat as low as you can without losing the arch in your lower back.

1B WEIGHTED CHINUP

Sets: 4 Reps: 5

Hang from a chinup bar with hands shoulder-width apart and palms facing you. Pull yourself up until your chin is over the bar. Wear a weighted dip belt for extra resistance – unless sets of five reps are challenging enough with your bodyweight.

2A ▽ INCLINE BENCH PRESS

Sets: 4 Reps: 5

Set an adjustable bench to a 30–45° angle and lie back on it. Grasp the bar just outside shoulder width and pull it out of the rack. Lower the bar to the upper part of your chest and then press it back up.







2B SINGLE-LEG RDL

Sets: 4 Reps: 5

Hold a dumbbell in one hand and stand on the opposite leg. Bend your hips back and lower your torso until you feel your lower back is about to lose its arch. Squeeze your glutes and extend your hips to come up.

3A ▷ MEDICINE BALL SLAM

Sets: 4 Reps: Work for 30 seconds

Hold a medicine ball overhead with both hands. Reach back until you feel a stretch in your abs and then throw the ball straight down onto the floor as hard as you can. Catch it on the rebound and begin the next rep.

3B RUSSIAN TWIST

Sets: 4 Reps: Work for 30 seconds

Sit on the floor with your legs in front of you and your knees bent 90 degrees. Hold a weight or medicine ball in front of you with your arms extended. Rotate as far as you can to the right and then to the left.



Day III

1 DUMBBELL FARMER'S WALK

Reps: Walk 20m

Pick up a very heavy pair of dumbbells and walk. Keep your chest out and shoulders back and squeeze the dumbbells hard to maintain control.



2 ONE-ARM DUMBBELL SNATCH

Reps: 3 (each side)

Hold a dumbbell in one hand and stand with feet shoulder-width apart. Keep your torso as upright as possible and bend your hips and knees until the weight hangs between your legs – maintain the arch in your lower back. Jump, extending your hips explosively, and raise the weight straight up your body. When it gets to your chest, flip your wrist and "catch" the bell overhead with your arm extended.



3 DUMBBELL PUSH PRESS

Reps: 5

Hold a dumbbell in each hand at shoulder level and stand with feet shoulder-width apart. Dip your knees quickly and use the momentum to explosively press the weights overhead.

4 TURKISH GETUP

Reps: 2 (each side)

Lie on your back on the floor holding a dumbbell with your left hand over your chest, perpendicular to the floor. Bend your left knee 90°. Brace your abs and raise your torso off the floor. Use your right hand for support. Now use your left foot to raise your hips off the floor. Sweep your right leg back and rest on your right knee. Come up to a standing position and then reverse the motion to return to the floor.



KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE WEIGHT THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE REP.



5 PLATE PUSH

Reps: Walk 20m

Place a 10kg weight plate on the floor (you may have to rest it on a towel so it slides more easily), or go outside and place it on grass. Get behind the plate and push it, keeping your hips as low to the ground as possible.





Monitoring your heartrate helps you maintain the perfect intensity for fat loss

THE EXPERT

NAME: MARTIN ROONEY

SPECIALITY: STRENGTH & CONDITIONING

SHOULD I USE A HEARTRATE MONITOR IN THE GYM?

Martin Rooney, elite coach and author of *Warrior Cardio*, believes that wearing a heartrate monitor can be as useful for gym training as it is for running.

Heartrate monitors (HRMs) are a staple for endurance athletes – they allow them to track their performance accurately while running, cycling or swimming. You rarely see people wearing them at the gym, however, least of all in the weights room. Here's the thing, though: if you're looking to burn fat, the level of instant, accurate feedback they provide can make all the difference.

Don't get me wrong – an HRM won't help if you're following a traditional bodybuilding or strength-based weightlifting plan. But if fat loss is your primary goal, those aren't the best workout options anyway. Weights-based interval training is one of the most effective ways to burn fat, provided you push yourself hard enough and allow enough recovery time between intervals. An HRM lets you track both variables accurately while you train.

SORE POINT

You've probably seen or tried a weights-based interval class at your local gym. They tend to throw together all manner of random exercises in circuits or complexes, performed for high reps with minimal rest for anything up to an hour. Most people assume that because these classes leave them exhausted and sore, they must be generating great results – but this isn't always the case.

My alternative approach is called Hurricane Training. Each Hurricane workout groups a sprint – on a treadmill, bike or rower – with a pair of weights-based resistance exercises for nine interval sets (see the box below). As you finish each set your heartrate should be at least 85% of your maximum (you can work out your max using the Karvonen Formula by subtracting your age from 220). Then you rest for the time it takes for your heartrate to drop to 60% of your max before starting the next interval.

MISSING A BEAT

An HRM isn't essential – if you prefer, you can find your pulse next to your Adam's apple, count how many times it beats in six seconds and multiply this by ten to work out your bpm. An HRM is just a lot more straightforward and accurate. You can use the HRM to check that your heartrate is at 85% of your max or higher as soon as you finish each interval. If it isn't, you need to work harder in the next one. It also ensures that you can start the next interval the second your heartrate drops to 60% of your max. The more accurate you are, the better the fat loss results. ■

STORM THE GYM

Torch fat with one of Rooney's signature Hurricane sessions. Complete nine intervals, resting until your heartrate drops to 60% of your max between each interval.

TREADMILL SPRINTS

Rooney says: "Aim to sprint as close to your top speed as possible, but keep the interval short. Anything longer than 30 seconds isn't a sprint."



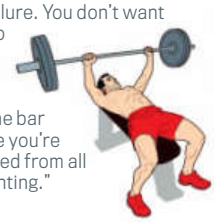
CHINUPS

Rooney says: "You should be failing at around ten reps. If this is too hard, swap it for kettlebell swings with a weight you can swing comfortably ten times. If ten chinups is too easy, increase the resistance by wearing a weighted vest."



BENCH PRESSES

Rooney says: "Pick a weight that's around 60% of your one-rep max and work to near-failure. You don't want to go too heavy and get trapped under the bar because you're exhausted from all the sprinting."



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- POWER
- CONDITIONING
- GRIP



Rope it in. *With the right moves, you can develop a punishing workout.*

battle ropes

Think you know the ropes? Think again. Go beyond the standard slams for a full-body workout that'll torch fat for 24 hours.

If you've seen battle ropes – the attention-seeker's best gym buddy – in action, chances are you've caught one of two moves: the all-out slam beloved of MMA fighters or the interpretive dance-like wave favoured by ladies (and men) who prefer not to sweat. There's definitely more to them than that.

With the right moves, these heavy ropes can test your body from every angle, turning a shoulder-and-arms workout into a full-body fat burner. Use this 12-minute blast as a finisher: do each move for 20 seconds, rest for 40, and move on to the next move. Do the whole routine twice. Enough rope? It sure will be.





1 BICEPS WAVE

Keeping the rest of your body still, wave the ropes as fast as possible, focusing on high reps and high amplitude. It'll prime your muscles for what's to come.





2 LATERAL WHIP

With a slight bend in your elbows, bring the ropes up as if you're doing a lateral raise, keeping your thumbs pointing slightly forward. Then whip them downwards. Continue to do your raises at speed.





3 OUTSIDE SPIRAL

With alternate arms, make outward circles so that the rope moves like a corkscrew, working your shoulders and rotator cuffs.





4 LYING T

Lie face down with your arms forming a T-shape, then move them up and down as if you're preparing for liftoff. It'll work your lower back and shoulders.





5 RUSSIAN TWIST

A variation on a classic. Sit with your legs straight and hands together with a rope in each. Brace your core, then twist to touch the ropes on one side of your body, then the other.





6 JUMPING SMASH

The grand finale. Jump up and bring both ropes down together, aiming for high amplitude. Repeat with as much height and velocity as you can manage – it's only 20 seconds.

Words Joel Snape Photography Danny Bird Model Ben Watts@WAthletic



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Feasts in a flash

With just a few ready-to-go foods from the supermarket or deli, you've got the makings of a quick, healthy, muscle-friendly gourmet meal.

BY MATTHEW KADEY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER TESTANI

The fit guy faces a unique shopping conundrum when he's tired and short on time: If he buys convenience foods, he's going to sacrifice his health (and his abs). But if he buys healthy fare, he'll have to give up half his evening to prepare it. If only healthy foods were sold that could be easily made into delicious meals...

Well, they are, of course – you just have to recognise their potential. A store-bought rotisserie chicken is waiting to be transformed into a Tex-Mex salad; frozen waffles are ready to morph into a dessert-like breakfast delight. On your next shopping trip, pick up some grab-and-go items, head home and combine them with ingredients you already have, and transform mundane meals into scrumptious, muscle-building feasts.



Cheap chick. *Store-bought rotisserie chicken is not processed, unlike cold cuts.*



That's some snappy salmon. *Turn a can of fish, a bag of frozen vegies and some boil-in-a-bag rice into a banquet at breakneck speed.*

1

Salmon Curry in a Hurry

MAKES: 4 SERVINGS

CONVENIENCE FOODS NEEDED

- Canned salmon
- Frozen mixed vegetables
- Boil-in-a-bag rice
- Curry paste

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pouch boil-in-a-bag brown rice
- 2 tsp oil
- 1 onion, diced
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1½ tbsp jarred red-curry paste
- 3 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 400ml light coconut milk
- 4 (110g) cans pink salmon, drained
- 1 (400g) bag frozen stirfry vegetables
- Juice of ½ lime

DIRECTIONS

1) Prepare rice according to package directions.
2) Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and salt; cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add curry paste; cook 30 seconds.
3) Pour broth and coconut milk in pan. Bring to a simmer and heat 10 minutes. Stir in salmon and vegetables, bring to a simmer, and heat 5 minutes. Stir in lime juice and prepared brown rice.

NUTRITION (PER SERVING)

389 calories, 30g protein, 31g carbs, 16g fat

2

Tex-Mex Chicken Taco Salad PAGE 115

MAKES: 4 SERVINGS

CONVENIENCE FOODS NEEDED

- Rotisserie chicken
- Canned black beans
- Frozen corn
- Bagged fresh spinach
- Corn tortillas

INGREDIENTS

- 4 corn tortillas
- 2 cups frozen corn
- 8 cups bagged fresh spinach
- 2 cups rotisserie chicken, sliced
- 1 (425g) can black beans, drained
- 550g cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 avocado, sliced
- 1 cup red onion, thinly sliced
- ½ cup light sour cream
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- Juice of 1 lime
- ½ tsp chipotle chilli powder

DIRECTIONS

1) Preheat oven to 170°. Place tortillas on a baking tin. When oven is hot, heat tortillas until crispy, 8–10 minutes. Prepare corn according to package directions.
2) Divide spinach, chicken, black beans, tomatoes, avocado, red onion and cooked corn among serving plates. In a bowl, whisk together sour cream, olive oil, lime juice, chipotle powder and a few pinches of salt.
3) Break tortillas into one-inch pieces and sprinkle over salads. Drizzle sour cream dressing on top.

NUTRITION (PER SERVING)

536 calories, 36g protein, 52g carbs, 23g fat

3

Waffles w/Yoghurt Cherry Sauce

NOT SHOWN

MAKES: 4 SERVINGS

CONVENIENCE FOODS NEEDED

- Frozen waffles
- Frozen cherries
- Yoghurt

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup plain low-fat Greek yoghurt
- 1 cup frozen pitted cherries, thawed
- 1 scoop vanilla protein powder
- 8 frozen 100% whole-grain waffles
- ⅓ cup unsalted almonds, chopped

DIRECTIONS

1) Place yoghurt, cherries and protein powder in a blender and blend until smooth.
2) Toast waffles according to package directions. Serve waffles topped with blended cherry sauce and almonds.

NUTRITION (PER SERVING)

342 calories, 17g protein, 41g carbs, 13g fat



4

Jerky Chickpea Pizza Bowl

MAKES: 4 SERVINGS

CONVENIENCE FOODS NEEDED

- Canned chickpeas
- Beef jerky
- Grated mozzarella cheese
- Roasted red capsicum

INGREDIENTS

- 2 (425g) cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 2 tsp Italian seasoning
- ½ tsp dried chilli pepper flakes
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 60g jerky, chopped
- ½ cup jarred, sliced, roasted red capsicum
- ½ cup oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, chopped
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 cup grated part-skim mozzarella cheese
- ⅓ cup fresh basil, sliced

DIRECTIONS

1) Preheat oven to 190°. Place chickpeas in an ovenproof pan and toss with oil, Italian seasoning, chilli pepper flakes, salt and pepper. Roast for 15 minutes.
2) Stir jerky, roasted red capsicum, sun-dried tomatoes and tomato paste into chickpeas. Sprinkle cheese on top and cook 5 minutes more. Divide among serving bowls and garnish with basil.

NUTRITION (PER SERVING)

397 calories, 25g protein, 48g carbs, 12g fat

5

Tomato Tuna Melt

NOT SHOWN

MAKES: 2 SERVINGS

CONVENIENCE FOODS NEEDED

- Pouched tuna
- Coleslaw mix
- Shredded cheese

INGREDIENTS

- 2 (100g) pouches tuna
- 1 cup coleslaw mix, chopped
- 2 tbsp olive-oil mayonnaise
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp capers, drained
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 2 large tomatoes
- 60g grated cheddar
- 1 tbsp chopped chives

DIRECTIONS

1) Preheat broiler. Place tuna in a bowl and flake with a fork. Stir in coleslaw, mayo, mustard, capers and pepper.
2) Slice about 0.5cm off the top of each tomato and use a spoon to scoop out innards. Stuff tomatoes with tuna mixture and top each with cheese.
3) Place stuffed tomatoes on a baking sheet and broil until cheese is melted and slightly browned. Serve garnished with chives.

NUTRITION (PER SERVING)

392 calories, 29g protein, 11g carbs, 26g fat

Canadian researchers found that people who ate chickpeas reduced their LDL cholesterol by 5%.



Can you cut it?
Being able to run 5km and squat 1.5 times your bodyweight is a mark of good health.

THE EXPERT

NAME: ALEX VIADA
SPECIALITY: HYBRID TRAINING

CAN I TRAIN TO BE FAST AND STRONG AT THE SAME TIME?

Alex Viada squats 320kg, deadlifts 335kg and runs triathlons and ultramarathons, and he'll teach you to do the same.

Let me make this simple: if you think you can't be strong and fast at the same time, you're not training properly. Either that or you're giving up way too easily. You might not set records in either area but if you think you can only do one or the other you're ignoring thousands of football players and blokes in the military who do both.

PICK AND MIX

The problem with most running and lifting programs is that they're very time-intensive. If you try simply to do both, it'll end in absolute disaster. That's what happened to me the first time I tried it. The trick is to keep the crucial core so you get about 80% of the benefit of each. You'll have to run less than a marathon runner and lift less than a strength athlete – but, in the end, the two complement each other, so one doesn't prevent you training successfully in the other.

The more you want to do, the more selective you have to be with your exercises. Look at what will improve you and what's just work for the sake of work. If you want to train to be fast and strong, keep it simple – do two to three running workouts and two to three lifting workouts a week, each at varying intensity and volume. Stick to what you know will be useful. That won't be the same for everyone, but a general rule is to do compound multi-joint movements such as squats, lunges and overhead presses for strength and a combination of short, fast intervals and long, slow runs for conditioning.

HEAD GAMES

It's also important to consider fatigue and to distinguish between mental and physical fatigue. High-intensity work and long-distance, low-intensity exercise produce different types of physical and mental fatigue, and managing this is vital. Perform all of the activities that create the same kind of fatigue at the same time. For example, you should do your heavy upper-body training session and heavy sprint-interval session on the same day. The same goes for a long run that takes as much mental as physical endurance. Do your slow bodybuilding-type exercises on the same day as the long run because they require the same type of endurance.

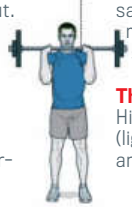
I tell people that if you can run 5km without walking and squat 1.5 times your bodyweight, you're a healthy, well-rounded individual. If you can't do either, you need to address that – but never think you can't do both. ■

THE HYBRID PLAN

Viada combines high-intensity (heavy weights, low reps) days with high-volume ones (lighter weights, higher reps) to manage fatigue and stay fresh for tough runs.

Monday
Morning: High-intensity upper-body workout.
Afternoon: 400-800m intervals, above race pace. Run 2.4km in total.

Tuesday
High-intensity lower-body workout.



Wednesday
"This is your mid-tempo run," says Viada. Aim for 20-40 minutes' running, slightly slower than race pace.

Thursday
High-volume upper-body day (lighter weights but more sets and reps than Monday).

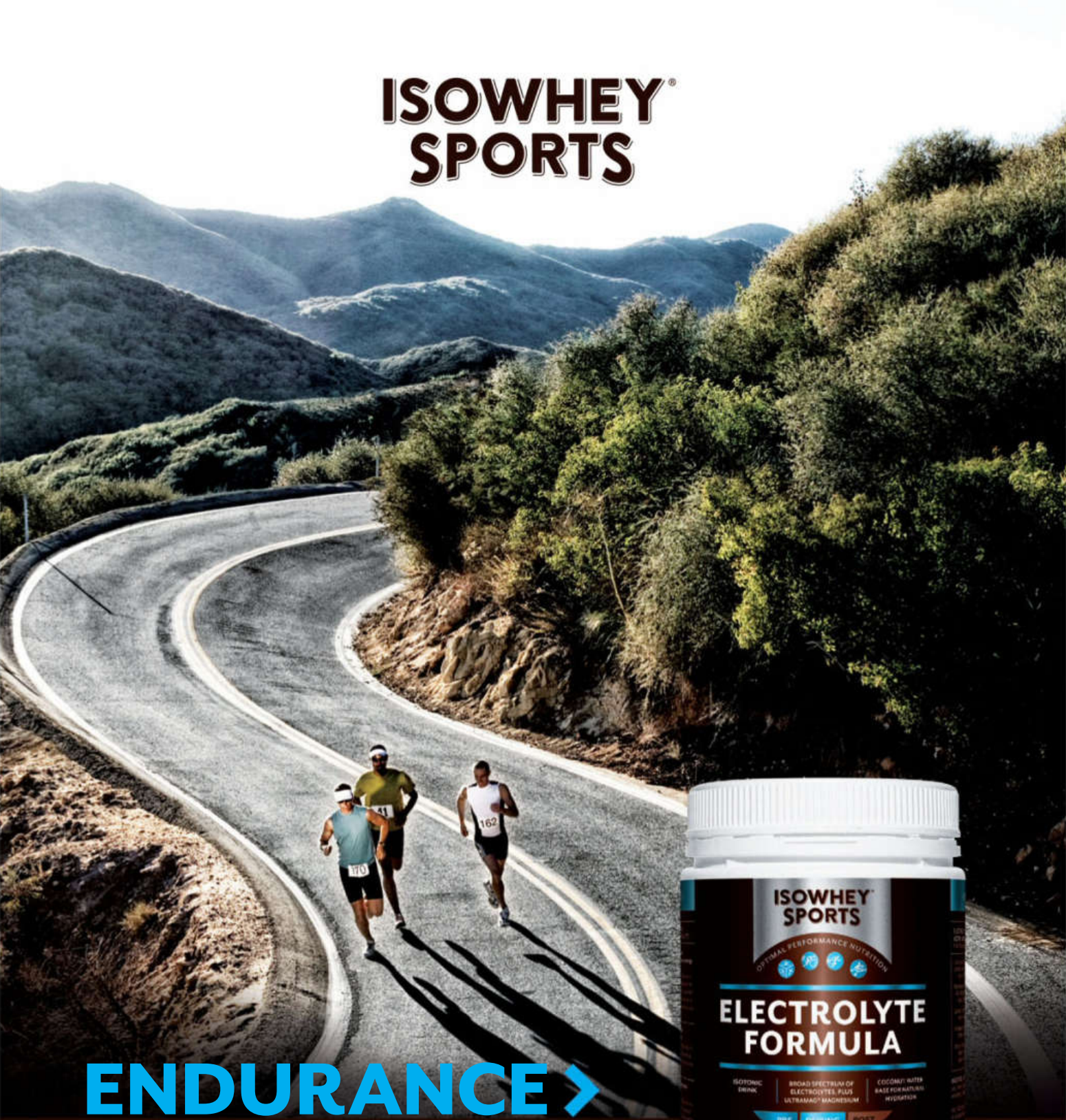
Friday
High-volume lower-body day.



Saturday/Sunday
Do 60 minutes or more of easy cardio on one weekend day. Rest on the other.

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Master the handstand pushup in the comfort of your own bedroom for an iron core and an impressive party piece.



Your home is the perfect place to put your feet up – with handstand pushups, that is. "When it comes to improving your overall strength, spatial awareness and body control, handstand training is up there with the best bodyweight exercises you can do with no equipment," says Shivam Patel, who created this routine. "The four moves in this workout will build the core strength and body co-ordination needed to execute the handstands." Build your strength with this workout and work up to the magic HSPU. Just be sure to wear non-marking trainers so you don't leave footprints up the wall.

THE GOAL

Handstand pushup
Stand facing a wall. Put your hands on the floor, locking out your arms, and kick your feet up so your heels are against the wall. Be confident rather than hesitant here. Keep your abs and glutes tight throughout. With your feet together and eyes looking forwards, not at the floor, bend your arms until your head is just off the floor (place a folded towel there to protect yourself), then push back up. One is an achievement. Ten is the goal.

DIRECTIONS

Set your alarm 20 minutes early. Complete all of the exercises in a circuit for 60 seconds each without pausing. Rest for 60 seconds, then repeat for three rounds in total. That leaves you with five minutes to kill – time to make a brew.

Bedroom DJ

SONOS PLAY: 3
While you're mastering that handstand pushup, get some beats happening with the Sonos Play: 3. With three integrated speakers and three digital amps, this all-in-one player streams music wirelessly in any room for wall-to-wall sound. $499, *sonos.com*

Words Sam R der **Photography** Tom M es **Model** A ex McDona d@WAth et c
Grooming Alice Theobald@Joy Goodman using Label M and Clarins Men

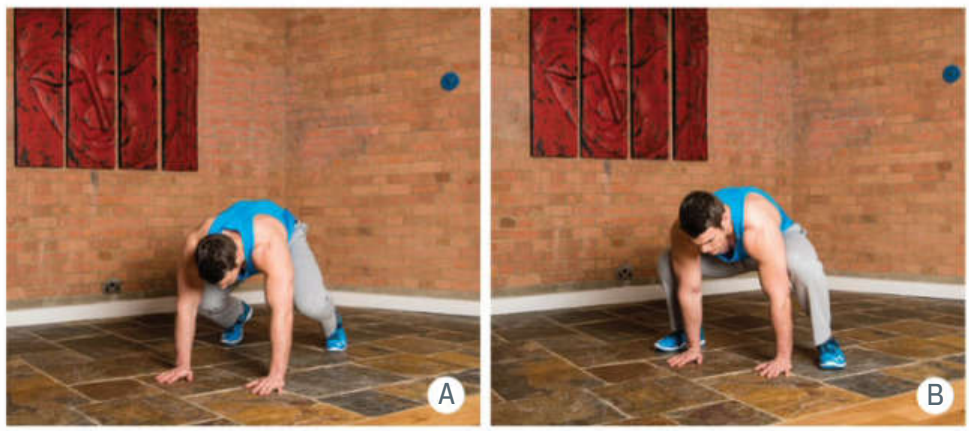
1
BEAR CRAWL
TIME 60SEC

Get on all fours, keeping your back straight and hips as high as possible. Keeping your core tight, move one arm and the opposite leg forward at the same time, then repeat on the other side. Move purposefully but don't rush.



2
FROG HOP
TIME 60SEC

Start in a deep squat position. Put your hands on the floor in front of you and hop your feet forwards so they land just outside your hands. Repeat this movement to continue moving forwards.



3
HOLLOW HOLD
TIME 60SEC

Lie on your back, pressing your lower spine into the floor. Tuck your chin in to your chest, tense your core and – keeping your arms and legs together – raise your arms and legs off the floor to make a shallow dish shape, and hold. If you struggle to hit the minute mark, break up the 60 seconds into 20-second chunks.



4
HANDSTAND WALL WALK
TIME 60SEC

Facing away from the wall, put your hands on the floor, locking out your arms, and carefully walk your feet up the wall until your body is in a straight line. Keep your core tight, tuck your head in to face the wall, pause for five seconds, then walk back down to the start.



SERVES YOU WELL

Summer means time on the tennis court, and we've got the workout to make you a winner.



THE COACH

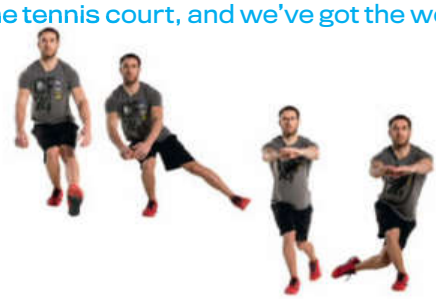
Arran Peck is a physical trainer for the Lawn Tennis Association, who has worked with junior, development and professional players. He has also trained pro rugby union players and Olympians.

THE GOAL

"Tennis involves intermittent bouts of intense activity for an indeterminate time, so tailoring your training can be tricky," says Peck. "But the key attributes are joint mobility and stability and explosive strength, and that's what this workout covers. Additionally, I'd recommend multi-directional speed work over five, ten and 15m, as well as Tabata sprints (20 seconds' work, ten seconds' rest)."

THE WORKOUT

"Whether you're training for tennis or just using this as a conditioning workout, perform six reps of each move, or six each side where applicable," says Peck. "It works for other racquet sports too, although you should tweak the duration of each move to mimic the time you spend working in that sport. Do the number of sets required, resting for 90 seconds between sets, then rest for two minutes and move on to the next exercise. If you're doing it as a conditioning workout, complete six reps of each exercise and move on to the next with minimal rest, but rest for two minutes between circuits. Do the workout two to three times a week." ■



1 SINGLE-LEG MULTI-DIRECTIONAL SQUAT

Stand on one leg. Lower into a squat, extending your non-standing leg in front of you (12 o'clock), keeping your foot, knee and hip stable. Return to the start and repeat, extending your leg to 3 o'clock (lateral), 6 o'clock (behind) and 9 o'clock (behind your body laterally). That completes one rep.

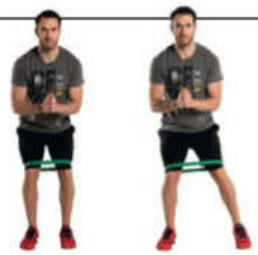
Beginner 3 sets/3 circuits
Intermediate 4 sets/4 circuits
Advanced 5 sets/5 circuits



2 SINGLE-LEG ROMANIAN DEADLIFT

Stand on one leg holding a light dumbbell in your other hand. Bend forward, hingeing at the hips, bending your knee slightly and keeping your back straight. Extend your non-standing leg behind you and let the weight hang straight down. Return to the start under control. Complete all the reps on one side, then switch.

Beginner 3 sets/3 circuits
Intermediate 4 sets/4 circuits
Advanced 5 sets/5 circuits



3 MINI STRETCH BAND LATERAL STEP

Stand with a stretch band around your knees and your hips and knees slightly flexed. Take a small step to the side with your left foot. Under control, follow with your right leg so you end up in the same stance you started in. Complete six steps to the left, then repeat in the opposite direction.

Beginner 3 sets/3 circuits
Intermediate 4 sets/4 circuits
Advanced 5 sets/5 circuits



4 PUSHUP RENEGADE ROW

Get into the top of a pushup position with feet slightly wider apart than usual, holding a dumbbell in each hand. Bend your arms and lower your chest, then press back up. Lift one dumbbell towards your armpit in a rowing movement, then lower it. Alternate sides until you have completed all the reps.

Beginner 3 sets/3 circuits
Intermediate 4 sets/4 circuits
Advanced 5 sets/5 circuits



5 MEDICINE BALL OVERHEAD SLAM

Stand holding a medicine ball with both hands in front of your hips. Raise it overhead, aiming to extend at the ankles, knees, hips, trunk and arms in sequence. When you reach the top position, return quickly towards the start position, releasing the ball as it passes in front of your head and catching it as it bounces.

Beginner 3 sets/3 circuits
Intermediate 4 sets/4 circuits
Advanced 5 sets/5 circuits



6 MEDICINE BALL RUSSIAN TWIST

Sit with knees bent and feet off the floor, holding a light medicine ball in both hands with arms extended and shoulders retracted. Rotate to one side under control, keeping your hips stable and torso upright. Return to the start and immediately repeat on the other side. Continue to alternate for each rep.

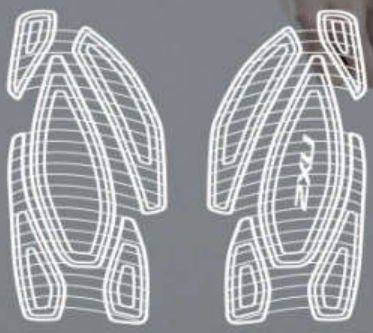
Beginner 3 sets/3 circuits
Intermediate 4 sets/4 circuits
Advanced 5 sets/5 circuits

Words Sam Rider Photography Joel Anderson Model Richard Ampaw@Select

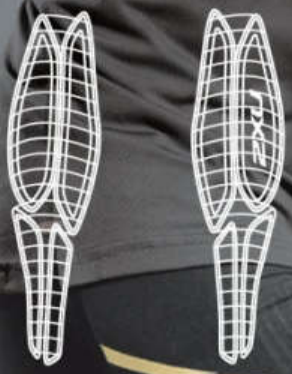
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INJURY-FREE CARDIO

Whether you use them for a warm-up or an hour-long workout, cardio machines can cause injury if you're not careful. Here are the common slip-ups to avoid.



Andy Curtis is a head physio aiming to make physiotherapy, massage and physical conditioning more accessible, affordable and effective.

Sheltered from road traffic and the elements, your gym's cardio machines should be low-risk – but there are hidden dangers. Treadmill-related injuries account for thousands of emergency room visits in Australia each year. Most injuries are minor, however, and can be avoided with the right precautions.

1 EXERCISE BIKE

"Poor set-up on the bike is a common cause of knee pain," says Curtis. "Imbalanced forces from your IT band, hamstrings and quads can result in patellofemoral pain, felt as a clicking or grinding. Instead of gliding up and down over the knee, the kneecap is dragged side to side, causing friction."

PREVENT IT

"Set the bike up properly. With the cranks vertical, ensure your lower leg is slightly bent, aiming for a 155° angle behind your knee, and make sure the clips are tight around the balls of your feet. Foam rolling improves fascial mobility too – spend 15 minutes massaging your legs and lower back three times a week."

2 TREADMILL

"Running at a 1% incline is a great way to replicate road conditions, but any steeper and it can overload the achilles tendon, especially if you're a midfoot or forefoot striker. Combining an increased workload with a weakness in the hips or knees is certain to aggravate the tendon."

PREVENT IT

"Increase your distance and speed gradually and add free-weights exercises to your programme. Do lightweight squats, split squats and crab walks – where you lower into a half squat and take big steps sideways – for three sets of 15 reps each."

3 ROWING MACHINE

"Lateral epicondylopathy, or tennis elbow, is a common rowing injury that can result in damage to the common extensor tendon at the elbow. Multiple muscles attach through a small tendon and, under repeated tension, it's easily irritated."

PREVENT IT

"When rowing, keep your wrists in a neutral position and don't grip too tightly. Tennis elbow is also linked to poor upper back and neck mobility, which you can fix with thoracic extension stretches over a foam roller. With arms crossed over your chest, lean back with the roller under your middle back for 30 seconds three times."



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"Resistance band scapular retractions activate your rotator cuff muscles, improving stability in your upper back and shoulders," says Curtis. "Loop the band around a fixed bar and hold the handles at chest height, then pull them towards you while pinching your shoulder blades back and together. Do three sets of 15 reps before rowing and any other chest, shoulder or back work."

4 FLEXIBILITY ISSUES

"All the above machines require the arms and legs to exert powerful forces while the body stays relatively still. This is determined by the stability around your trunk. It's easy to let your pelvis shift on the bike, swing your arms too much on the treadmill or pull too hard on the rower, all of which can result in pain."

PREVENT IT

"Strengthening your core reduces the risk of common cardio injuries. Start with power planks – where you contract your quads, glutes, abs and chest muscles hard – for three sets of ten seconds, then progress to overhead squats, holding an empty barbell for three sets of ten." ■

mike prior / istock

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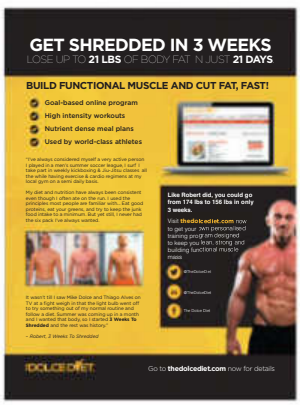
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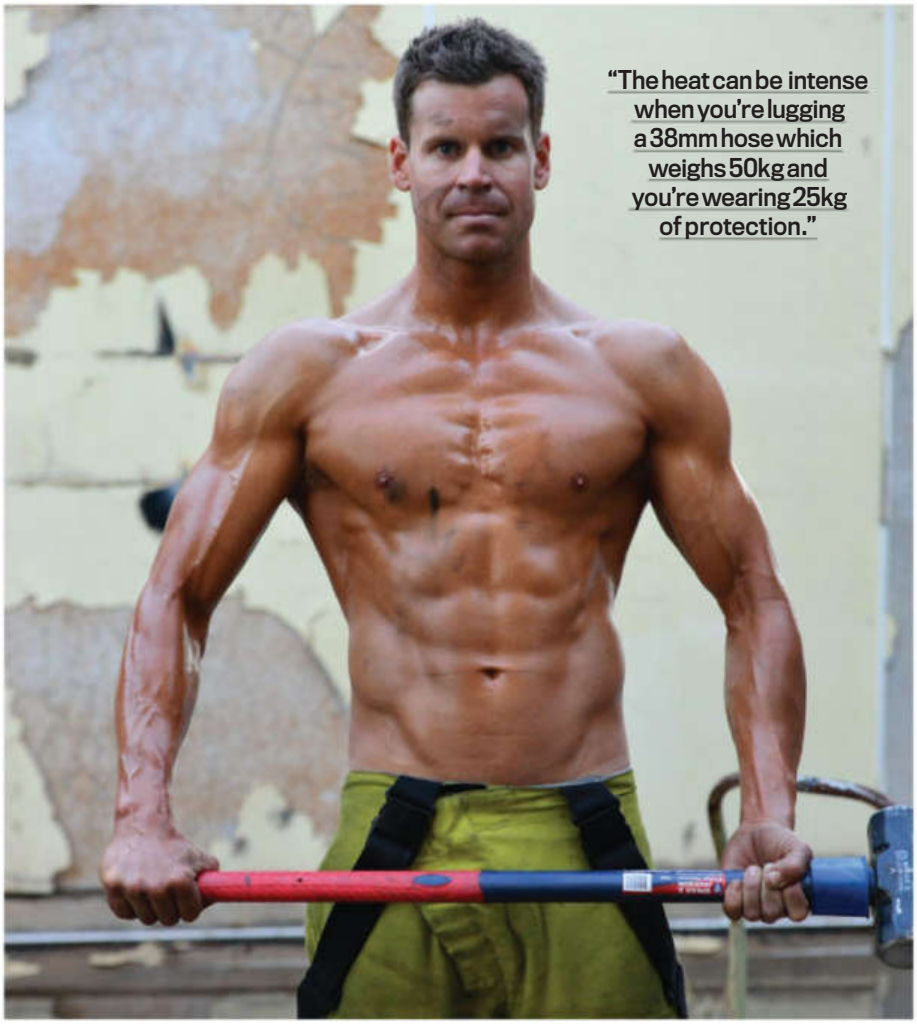
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FIRE IN THE BELLY

Three-and-a-half years ago Alice Springs carpenter Ross Pearce downed tools to become a fireman. He reckons it's the best thing he's ever done.

EARLY AMBITION

"I walked past the fire station when I left school and asked about a job and they said get a trade and some life experience," Ross, 28, says. "So I became a chippie, working all over the Territory. But after a while I couldn't handle those 45° days. It was always in the back of my mind to become a fiery and it took me two goes to get in. I love the job: it's great knowing you are helping the community." Ross's career choice may also help him live longer. ANU research showed people who don't like their jobs are at greater risk of developing heart disease and are just as likely to suffer from mental health issues as the unemployed.

TESTING TIMES

"You need to pass the physical test to become a firefighter," Ross says. "You have to score to 9.6 in a beep test; carry an 80kg dummy for 15m; carry a 20kg drum up storeys; pull a 30m hose reel for 15m, then at a 45° angle; and pull a 64mm hose, advancing for 10m, holding and squirting three times. There are also maths, English and aptitude tests. The test was demanding but I worked out for it and it's not unachievable."

HEAVY LOAD

"We had to do a medical assist recently where it took several of us to lift an extremely overweight person from a house. You have to be fit enough to contribute. [Ross is 185cm tall, weighs 90kg and stores only 6% bodyfat.] In any fire the heat can be intense, especially when you're lugging a 38mm hose which weighs 50kg through a house, wearing 25 kg in protection."

FIT TO FUNCTION

"We recently did a calendar (see main pic) for charity so I've been focused on weights. We use the car park – it's about 50m across – at the fire station to set up sprint points and do bodyweight exercises to get the heartrate up. There's also a gym here at the station with a smith machine, cable crossover, rowing machine and a runner. I do a lot of sprints and battle ropes, work out four times a week on weights, and twice a week on cardio and functional fitness. I have a 12-week program which I change up to test muscles. Plus, I've always played AFL – the fire department likes sports that show you can work in a team." Ross's sporting endeavours tally with research published in the *Journal of Organizational Research and Studies* which reported people who play team sport display higher levels of leadership, self-confidence and self-respect, compared with those who don't.

BREATH OF LIFE

"When we did Confined Space Training we saw that big guys use up a lot more oxygen, so I've had to work on cardio and being able to lower my heartrate so I don't soak so much oxygen. If I'm in a situation like that when I'm puffing hard, I stop and do some deep breathing for a couple of seconds. Then I move on and I'm good. Scientific studies have shown that controlling breath can help to manage stress and stress-related conditions. Research in the *US National Library of Medicine Institutes of Health* revealed patients who conducted voluntary breathing were able to decrease cortisol [stress hormone] levels.

A LOT TO SEE HERE

"We see car crashes and burnt-out houses and it's not pleasant. My boss said to us: 'We're not the people who cause it, we're just there to help,' and I think that philosophy works for me. We help each other, too. They are a good bunch at the station and if anything goes wrong or there's a problem we discuss it." Ross and his mates have the right idea. A paper published in *Biological Psychiatry* found talking about stressful events significantly "helps improve symptoms". ■

– Ashley Gray



ROSS PEARCE

Age: 28
Lives: Alice Springs
Height: 185cm
Weight: 90kg
Bodyfat: 6%



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